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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE THEATRE

by Allardyce Nicoll

See Pages:

Middle Ages	67 70 71, Fig. 60 73 77
Renaissance	83 85 87 88 89 91 92 95 98 99 102 103
Commedia del arte	108 109 112 113 114
Elizabethan	121 125 130 131
France and Italy, 18th century	143 145 146 155
Restoration	160 166 167 168
England 18th century	172 173 174 175 176 177 178 179 180 181 182 183
19th century	186 187 192
Modern Theatre	199 201 203 204 Fig. 264 " 265 " 268 " 269 " 270 Page 220, Fig. 274 275 276

(Illustration)

Fig: I. The Orchestra of the Theatre of Dionysos at Athens

Photo Alinari.

THE DEVELOPMENT

OF THE THEATRE

THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE THEATRE

A study of theatrical art from the
beginnings to the present day

by

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With two hundred and seventy-one
illustrations

New York
Harcourt, Brace and company
1927

Printed in Great Britain at the BALLANTYNE PRESS by
Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co. Ltd.
Colchester, London & Eton

PREFACE

Much has been written about the theatre. The Greek stage, the Elizabethan stage, the stage of our own day - all these have received more or less adequate treatment; but there is no book in the English language which presents a summary of theatrical art from the beginnings to the twentieth century. There is, of course, the monumental work of Mantzius, but that, noble as it is, is not always accurate, and is often clogged with biographical data unnecessary and distracting. It is my object, therefore, in this book to present a brief outline of the art of the theatre, with special reference to the English stage. For this purpose I have dealt with the Greek theatre, the Italian Renascence theatre, and the theatre of modern France and Germany, but have neglected the development of nineteenth-century Continental theatres, as these merely ran parallel to the English playhouses of the same time.

As such an outline as this would be useless without pictorial illustration, I have selected for reproduction what seemed to me the most typical drawings, plans, and engravings of the various periods. Some of these are necessarily well known (for one cannot escape de Witt's sketch of the Swan), but in general I have endeavoured to choose for this purpose designs more out of the way, so that this book contains a number of illustrations which either have never been reproduced at all or have not appeared in a modern work on this subject. I should desire to call special attention to the Buontalenti designs to be found in Chapter IV and those by Juvarra presented in Chapter VIII.

Necessarily, in a book which covers the history of theatrical decoration and arrangement from the times of Aeschylus to those of the present day, much detailed comment has had to be omitted, but I have aimed at devoting special attention to certain neglected aspects of the playhouse of former times, such as the orientation of the mansions in medieval plays and costume on the English stage up to 1750. Also I have devoted more space to the theatrical tendencies of past times than to those of the present, not because I believe the past to be greater than the present, but because there is fuller opportunity for gaining first-hand knowledge of the scenic art of to-day than for acquiring a knowledge of the art of the Bibienas and their fellow-workers. Above all, I have endeavoured to indicate what seemed to me the main tendencies in the various periods and to stress the continuity of tradition from earliest times to latest.

For those who wish to pursue further researches into individual aspects of this larger subject I have added a fairly full bibliography. No pretence is made in this to absolute completeness, but the selection will, I think, be found to be catholic.

A final note may be added to the general scope of the book. In dealing with the modern period I have made no attempt to discuss the technical terms of the stage or to describe scenic apparatus. At the same time I should not wish this book to be thought of as merely theoretic. The study of the theatre of the past is one which is necessary not only for the scenic artist, but for the true playgoer. Unless we can appreciate the stage of Sophocles and the stage of Shakespeare (not separately, but in their interrelations) we cannot hope to understand their works aright; unless we have a knowledge of past theatrical effort we can barely form an opinion concerning the more recent developments in scenic artistry. I have, therefore, a strictly practical purpose in the penning of this book, and if even in a slight way I may be the means of inducing others to study this subject more closely I shall feel myself to be amply rewarded.

In the course of preparing the volume for the press I have received helpful advice from my colleague Professor Earp, and from Mr. J. Laver, of the Victoria and Albert Museum. I desire also to express my thanks to the publishers and authors of the following books for permission kindly granted to reproduce designs and photographs:

Alexander Bakshy, "The Path of the Modern Russian Stage, and other Essays" (Cecil Palmer); A. C. Baumeister, "Denkmäler des klassischen Altertums"(R. Oldenbourg, München); Margarete Bieber, "Denkmäler zum Theaterwesen im Altertum" (Walter de Gruyter, Berlin); Sir Edmund Chambers, "The Mediaeval Stage" (Oxford University Press); W. Creizenach, "The English Drama in the Age of Shakespeare" (Sidgwick and Jackson); P.L. Duchartre, "La Comédie italienne"(Librairie de France, Paris); E. R. Fiechter, "Die baugeschichtliche Entwicklung des antiken Theaters" (C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, München); R. C. Flickinger, "The Greek Theater and its Drama"(University of Chicago Press); Gsell, "Monuments antiques de l'Algérie" (E. Boccard, Paris); A. E. Haigh, "The Attic Theatre" (Oxford University Press); C. Lanckoronski, "Städte Pamphyliens und Pisidiens" (F. Tempski, Vienna); Emile Male, "L'Art religieux" (Librairie Armand Colin, Paris); Karl Mantzius, "A History of Theatrical Art in Ancient and Modern Times" (Duckworth); Octave Navarre, "Le Théâtre grec (Payot, Paris); George C. D. Odell, "Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving" (Charles Scribner's Sons and Constable); Paul Reyher, "Les Masques anglais (Librairie Hachette); Corrado Ricci, "I Bibiena"(Alfieri e Lacroix, Milan); Carl Robert, "Die Masken der neueren attischen Komödie" (Max Niemeyer, Halle); Oliver M. Sayler, "Max Reinhardt and his Theatre (Brentano's, N.Y.); Theodor Wiegand, "Priene" (Georg Reimer, Berlin).

My thanks are also due to the following for facilities and help generously given in connexion with the reproduction of illustrations: His Grace the Duke of Devonshire, the Most Honourable the Marquess of Bath, Sir Israel Gollancz, Professor F. J. Curtis, and the authorities of the Victoria and Albert Museum, the British Museum, All Souls College, Oxford, Worcester College, Oxford, the Provinzialmuseum, Bonn, and the Landesbibliothek, Darmstadt.

A. N.

CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
I.	THE GREEK THEATRE	17

- (i) Introductory, p. 17
- (ii) The Origins of Tragedy and of Comedy, p.19
- (iii) The Ancient Athenian Theatre: Main Features, p.20
- (iv) The Scene-buildings and Stage, p.21
- (v) The Hellenistic Theatre, p.23
- (vi) The Proscenium and Stage of the Hellenistic Style, p.25
- (vii) Graeco-Roman Theatres, p.30
- (viii) Machines, p.31
- (ix) Festival Arrangements and the Chorus, p.35
- (x) The Unities and the Acts, p.37
- (xi) Masks and Costumes, p.38

II. THE ROMAN THEATRE 50

- (i) The Playhouses, p.50
- (ii) Actors, Costume, and Masks, p.57
- (iii) Types of Roman Drama, p.58

III. THE THEATRE IN THE MIDDLE AGES 60

- (i) The Relics of Roman Mime, p.60
- (ii) The Growth of Medieval Drama, p.62
- (iii) Medieval Theatres and Mise-en-Scène, p.64
- (iv) Machinery, Effects, and Costumes, p.73
- (v) Actors and Performance, p.76

IV. THEATRES OF RENASCENCE ITALY 81

- (i) The Classical Revival, p.81
- (ii) Vitruvius, p.84
- (iii) Perspective in Scenes, p.85
- (iv) The Teatro Olimpico, p.88
- (v) The Teatro Farnese at Parma, p.89
- (vi) Changing Scenery, p.91
- (vii) Machines and Lighting, p.96

The Development of the Theatre

Chapter Page

V. THE COMMEDIA DELL' ARTE 105

- (i) The Origins, p.105
- (ii) The Stock Characters: The 'Serious' Masks, p.106
- (iii) The Comic Masks: Arlecchino and Brighella, p.108
- (iv) Pulcinella and the Capitano, p.109
- (v) Pantalone, p.110
- (vi) The Significance of the Masks, p.112
- (vii) The Theatres of the Commedia dell' Arte, p.115

VI. SCENIC DESIGN IN FRANCE (BEFORE 1650) 116

VII. THEATRES OF ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND (TO 1642) 118

- (i) General Considerations, p.118
- (ii) The Hall Stages, p.118
- (iii) Staging at Court and at the Universities, p.119
- (iv) The Public Theatres, p.120
- (v) The Private Theatres, p.126
- (vi) The Masques of the Seventeenth Century, p.127
- (vii) Scenery in the Theatres, p.130
- (viii) The Actors, Costumes, and Accessories, p.134

VIII. THEATRES OF FRANCE AND ITALY (EIGHTEENTH CENTURY) 138

- (i) General Movements, p.138
- (ii) Theatre Structure, p.140
- (iii) Scenic Design, p.145

IX. RESTORATION THEATRES

- (i) Stage History, p.157
- (ii) Webb's Designs for "The Siege of Rhodes", p.158
- (iii) Webb's Designs for "Mustapha", p.158
- (iv) Plans for Theatres by Christopher Wren, p.159
- (v) Wren's Design for Drury Lane, p.163
- (vi) The Duke's Theatre in Dorset Garden, p.164
- (vii) Typical Scenes and Theatrical Conventions, p.165
- (viii) The Proscenium Doors, p.168
- (ix) Actors and Actresses, p.168

The Development of the Theatre

Chapter Page

X. THE ENGLISH THEATRES OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY 170

(i) Audiences and Theatres, p.170
(ii) The Playhouses, p.171
(iii) The Proscenium Doors, p.172
(iv) The"Mise-en-Scéne", p.173
(v) Costume, p.177

XI. THE THEATRES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY 185

(i) The Theatres, p.185
(ii) The Scenic Art of the Period, p.190

XII. THE THEATRES OF THE MODERN PERIOD

(i) The Realistic School, p.195
(ii) The Alternatives, p.197
(iii) Gordon Craig and Others, p.197
(iv) Futurist and other Movements, p.198
(v) The Complex and Simple Theatre, p.201
(vi) The Formal Setting, p.203

APPENDIX A. A Note on Costume on the Elizabethan Stage 205

APPENDIX B. Extracts from Leone de' Sommi 211

APPENDIX C. Designs by Giacomo Torelli da Fano (1608-78) 215

BIBLIOGRAPHY 229

INDEX 239

ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig.		Page
1.	The Orchestra of the Theatre of Dionysos at Athens	Frontispiece
2.	The Lycurgos Theatre of Dionysos at Athens	18
3.	Cross-Section through the Old and New Orchestras at Athens	21
4.	Plan of the Theatre at Epidauros	22
5.	The Theatre at Epidauros	23
6.	Plan of the Theatre at Eretria	24
7.	Cross-Section of the Theatre at Eretria	25
8.	The Skene of the Theatre at Oropos	26
9.	Reconstruction of the Stage at Delos	26
10.	The Theatre at Priene	27
11.	Scene from a Phlyax Comedy	28
12.	Scene from a Phlyax Comedy	28
13.	Scene from a Phlyax Comedy	29
14.	Scene from a Phlyax Comedy	29
15.	Scene from a Phlyax Comedy	30
16.	Plan of the Graeco-Roman Theatre at Termessos	31
17.	The Theatre at Termessos	32
18.	Terra-cotta Relief showing a Stage Wall	33
19.	Andromeda in Stage Dress	39
20.	Cothurnus, Masks, and Onkos on the Modern Chinese Stage	40
21.	Terra-cotta Figure of an Actor	40
22.	A Tragedy King	41
23.	Mask of a Tragic Hero	42
24.	Statuette of a Tragic Hero	42

Illustrations

Fig. Page

25. Mask of the Long-haired Heroine 43

26. Terra-cotta Statuette of a Comic Actor 43

27. Terra-cotta Statuette of a Comic Actor Declaiming 43

28. Menander Relief, showing Masks of Youth, Courtesan, and Old Man 44

29. Comedy Scene 45

30. Set of Masks 46

31. Terra-cotta showing Mask of an Old Man 47

32. Terra-cotta showing Mask of an Old Man 47

33. Terra-cotta showing Mask of a Comedy Slave 47

34. Terra-cotta showing Mask of a Comedy Slave 47

35. Terra-cotta Statuette of an Old Man 47

36. Mask of a Tragic Hero 47

37. Mask of a Messenger 48

38. Mask of a Tragic Heroine 48

39. Mask of the Golden Courtesan 49

40. Plan of the Marcellus Theatre at Rome 50

41. Stage Front at Djemila 51

42. The Theatre at Aspendos 52

43. Reconstruction of the Frons Scaenae at Aspendos 53

44. Reconstruction of the Frons Scaenae at Aspendos 53

45. The Outside Wall of the Theatre at Orange 54

46. The Theatre at Orange 54

47. The Theatre at Orange 55

48. Reliefs on the Hyposcenium of the Theatre at Athens 55

Illustrations

Fig.		Page
49.	A Roman Stage	56
50.	Masks for the "Andria" of Terence	57
51.	Syrus in the "Heautontimoroumenos" of Terence	58
52.	The Sepulchre	64
53.	Christ rising from the Tomb	65
54.	Christ rising from the Tomb	65
55.	The Mansions in the "Resurrection"	65
56.	The Mansions in the Donaueschingen Mystery Play	67
57.	The Lucerne Easter Play: Second Day	68
58.	The Lucerne Easter Play: First Day	69
59.	The Martyrdom of St Apollonia	70
60.	The Valenciennes Mystery Play	71
61.	Two Medieval Pageants	71
62.	Plan for "The Castle of Perseverance"	72
63.	Medieval Devil Costumes at Zurich	73
64.	A Platform Stage of the Sixteenth Century	73
65.	A Platform Stage of the Sixteenth Century	73
66.	Hell-mouth from the Caedmon Manuscript	75
67.	The Fool and the Devil	77
68.	Terra-cotta Statuettes of Roman Mimes	78
69.	Terra-Cotta Statuette of a Roman Mime	78
70.	Terra-cotta Showing the Mimus Calvus	79
71.	Eastern Mimi	79
72.	Three Theatre Settings for the "Andria" of Terence	85

Illustrations

Fig. Page

73. Theatre Setting for the "Heautontimoroumenos" of Terence 83

74. A Renascence Theatre 84

75. Theatre Setting for the "Adelphoe" of Terence 84

76. Theatre Setting for the "Hecyra" of Terence 84

77. Plan of a Greek Theatre in the Jocundus Edition of Vitruvius, 1513 85

78. Plan of a Theatre by Serlio 87

79. The Comic Scene according to Serlio 87

80. The Tragic Scene according to Serlio 87

81. The Satyric Scene according to Serlio 87

82. An Italian Setting of the Seventeenth Century 88

83. Design for a Tragic Scene by Jerome Bols 89

84. An Italian Setting of the Sixteenth Century 90

85. Plan of the Teatro Olimpico 91

86. The Teatro Olimpico 92

87. Plan of a Roman Theatre according to Daniello Barbaro 93

88. Design for a Street in the Teatro Olimpico, by Scamozzi 94

89. The Central Archway in the Teatro Olimpico 95

90. Methods of changing Scenery according to Sabbatini 96.

91. Design for Cloudwork and Divinities 97

92. Design for Cloudwork 98

93. Design for a 'Desert' Scene 99

94. Neptune and Sea-gods 100

95. Marine Monsters 101

96. The Setting for Bonarelli's "Il Solimano" (1620) 102

Illustrations

Fig.		Page
97.	The Setting for Bonarelli's "Il Solimano" (1620)	103
98.	La Comica Accesa	107
99.	Dancing-girls from a Herculaneum Frieze	107
100.	Francischina and Gian Farina	107
101.	Camilla Veronese as Ballerina	107
102.	Arlecchina, Late Seventeenth Century	108
103.	Arlecchino, Late Sixteenth Century	108
104.	Arlecchino, Late Sixteenth Century	108
105.	Arlequin as Chinaman	109
106.	Arlequin, Eighteenth Century	109
107.	Brighella, or Buffet, Seventeenth Century	110
108.	Scapino	110
109.	Scapino and Capitan Zerbino	110
110.	Riciulina and Metzetin	110
111.	A Roman Mask	111
112.	Mask of Pulcinella	111
113.	Razullo and Cucurucu	111
114.	Terra-cotta of a Roman Mime	111
115.	Capitano, Seventeenth Century	111
116.	Capitano, Seventeenth Century	112
117.	Capitan Bonbardon and Capitan Grillo	112
118.	Pantalone	112
119.	Pantalone	112
120.	Pantalone and his Daughter	112

Illustrations

Fig.		Page
121.	Il Dottore, Seventeenth Century	113
122.	Docteur Balouardo, Eighteenth Century	113
123.	Scene at the Hôtel de Bourgogne	113
124.	Coviello, Sixteenth Century	113
125.	Scaramucia and Fricasso	113
126.	Scaramouch	113
127.	An Italian Platform Stage	114
128.	A Platform Stage and Itinerant Players	114
129.	Frontispiece to "Les Originaux ou l'Italien"	114
130.	Teatro S. Carlino	115
131.	Frontispiece to "Le Départ des Comédiens"	115
132.	Frontispiece to "La Fille Sçavante"	115
133.	A Setting for "Pandoste"	117
134.	The Swan Theatre	121
135.	A Seventeenth-Century Stage	123
136.	A Seventeenth-Century Stage	123
137.	Model of the Stage shown in Kirkham's "The Wits" (1672)	124
138.	Reconstruction of an Elizabethan Theatre	125
139.	The Theatre at Ghent, 1539	126
140.	The Theatre at Antwerp, 1561	126
141.	Frontispiece for "Albion's Triumph" (1609)	127
142.	Palace and Rocks in "Oberon" (1611)	128
143.	Plan for "Florimène" (1635)	129
144.	Standing Scene for "Florimène" (1635)	130

Illustrations

Fig.		Page
145.	Plan for "Salmacida Spolia" (1640)	130
146.	Cross-section for "Salmacida Spolia" (1640)	131
147.	The Third Scene in "Salmacida Spolia" (1640)	131
148.	The Whole Heaven in "Salmacida Spolia" (1640)	132
149.	Plan for the Cockpit-in-Court	133
150.	Theatre Plan by Inigo Jones	134
151.	The Tragic Scene	135
152.	"Titus Andronicus" in 1595	136
153.	Costume of the Character of Nobody	136
154.	The Costume of Floods in "Chloridia" (1631)	136
155.	Costume of a Knight Masquer in "Oberon" (1611)	137

FIG.
156. Plan of a Theatre 138
157. Plan of the Teatro di Fano 139
158. Plan of the Teatro d'Imola 139
159. Plan of the Teatro alla Scala at Milan 140
160. Plan of the Teatro Farnese at Parma 140
161. Plan of the Old Theatre at Naples 141
162. Plan of the Teatro di Torino 141
163. Plan of the Teatro S. Carlo at Naples 141
164. Theatrical Design by F. da Bibiena 142
165. Theatrical Design by Giuseppe Bibiena 143
166. Theatrical Design by Giuseppe Bibiena 144
167. Theatrical Design by Giuseppe Bibiena 145
168. Theatrical Design by Giuseppe Bibiena 146
169. Proscenium Design by F. da Bibiena 146
170. Baroque Italian Design: Bibiena Family 147
171. Theatrical Design attributed to the Bibiena Family 148
172. Theatrical Design by F. da Bibiena 149
173. Plan of a Theatre by Andrea Pozzo 150
174. Theatrical Design by Andrea Pozzo 151
175. Theatrical Design by Andrea Pozzo 151
176. Theatrical Design by F. Juvarra 152
177. Theatrical Design by F. Juvarra 153
178. Theatrical Design by F. Juvarra 153
179. Theatrical Design by F. Juvarra 154
180. Theatrical Design by F. Juvarra 154
181. Theatrical Design by Piranesi 155
182. Theatrical Design by Piranesi 155
183. A Prison Scene by Piranesi 156
184. Plan of the Rutland House Stage 158
185. Section of the Rutland House Stage 158
186. Proscenium and Side-wings for "The Siege of Rhodes" (1656) 158
187. Design for the Shutter in "The Siege of Rhodes" (1656) 159
188. Design for a "Releive" in "The Siege of Rhodes" (1656) 159
189. Plan of the Whitehall Stage, 1665 160
190. Section of the Whitehall Stage, 1665 161
191. Theatre Plan by Sir Christopher Wren 162
192. Theatre Plan by Sir Christopher Wren 163
193. Theatre Plan by Sir Christopher Wren 163
194. Section of a Theatre by Sir Christopher Wren 164
195. Frontispiece to "Ariane" (1674) 165

FIG. PAGE
196. A German Setting of 1655 165
197. Three Settings in "The Empress of Morocco" (1673) 166
198. Two Settings in "The Empress of Morocco" (1673) 167
199. Model of Dorset Garden Theatre 168
200. Delpini as Pierrot at Sadler's Wells 171
201. The Audience at Sadler's Wells 172
202. The Fitzgiggo Riot, 1763 172
203. The Royalty Theatre, 1787 173
204. Cross-section of the Haymarket Theatre, 1807 173
205. Scene in "The Heiress" (1786) 174
206. Ancient Street Scene by William Capon 175
207. Scene for "A Christmas Tale" (1776) 175
208. Side Lighting in a German Theatre, 1790 176
209. Romeo and Juliet in the Eighteenth Century 176
210. Woodward as Mercutio 176
211. Garrick and Miss Bellamy as Romeo and Juliet 177
212. Garrick and Mrs Pritchard as Macbeth and Lady Macbeth 177
213. Garrick as Macbeth 178
214. Henderson as Hamlet, 1776 178
215. Frontispiece to Rowe's "Hamlet" (1709) 178
216. Quin as Coriolanus, 1749 179
217. Bannister as Zaphna, 1778 179
218. Garrick as Demetrius, 1777 179
219. Murray as Demetrius, 1797 179
220. Lewis as Pharnaces, 1795 179
221. Mossop as Zanga, 1776 180
222. Mossop as Bajazet, 1778 180
223. Lewis as Hippolitus, 1777 180
224. Barry and Mrs Barry as Bajazet and Selima, 1776 180
225. Benson as Timurkan, 1796 180
226. Barry as Othello, 1777 181
227. Pope as Varanes, 1793 181
228. Frontispiece to Rowe's "Henry IV, Part II" 181
229. Henderson as Falstaff, 1778 181
230. Macklin as Shylock, 1777 181
231. Macklin as Shylock 182
232. Brunsden as Dromio, 1779 182
233. Reddish as Posthumus, 1777 182
234. Garrick as King Lear, 1779 18
235. Mrs Hartley as Cleopatra, 1776 183

ILLUSTRATIONS

FIG.

236. Mrs Hartley as Andromache, 1777 183
237. Miss Younge as Merope, 1777 183
238. Mrs Oldfield as Rosamond, 1778 183
239. Mrs Melmoth as Queen Elizabeth, 1779 183
240. Mrs Woffington as Mistress Ford 184
241. Miss Wallis as Palmira, 1795 184
242. Drury Lane in 1775 186
243. Drury Lane in 1808 187
244. Plan of Drury Lane, 1809 188
245. Covent Garden in 1810 189
246. A Steamboat Scene in a Travestie of "The Tempest" 189
247. An Extravaganza Setting in the Nineteenth Century 189
248. A Greek Scene in Nineteenth-Century Burlesque 189
249. A Dance of Fairies in Kean's Production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" 192
250. A Setting for Chechov's "The Three Sisters" 196
251. Scene in "Nie-Boska Komedja" at the Teatr Polski 198
252. A Setting for "King Lear" at the Deutsches Theater, 1908 198
253. A Setting for "The Miracle" (1911) 199
254. A Modern Russian Setting 199
255. "Princess Turandot" as given by the Moscow Art Theatre 200
256. A Setting for "Die Wüpper" (1919) 201
257. A Model of the Revolving Stage at the Deutsches Theater 201
258. The Grosses Schauspielhaus 202
259. East London College Theatre 203
260. The Return to the Eighteenth Century 204
261. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli 218
262. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli 219
263. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli 220
264. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli 221
265. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli 222
266. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli 223
267. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli 224
268. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli 225
269. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli 226
270. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli 227
271. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli 228

The
DEVELOPMENT OF THE THEATRE

CHAPTER I

THE GREEK THEATRE

(i) Introductory

THE Greek theatre is, in more ways than one, the ancestor of all the theatres of modern Europe. Not only was Greece the first European country to raise dramatic performances to the level of an art, not only were the Greek dramatists among the finest masters whom the world-theatre has ever known, but the forms and conventions of the classic playhouses set an indelible seal upon the theatres of Renascence Italy, and thence were carried over, through the Elizabethan and Restoration periods in England, to modern times. It is through a disinclination to study these facts that so many able writers on Greek or on Elizabethan stage conditions have failed; it cannot too often be emphasized that those who segregate the Theatre of Dionysos at Athens or the Globe theatre in London, treating each as a separate entity, must inevitably fail to appreciate many of the most salient features of each. It is only when we take a bird's-eye view of the whole and trace the larger developments that we can reach a final synthesis.

In any discussion concerning the Greek stage it must be noted first of all that when we speak of the Greek theatre we are referring not to one thing, but to several things. Usually, in employing the phrase, we think of the original theatre at Athens, but besides that original theatre there were scores of centres where plays were performed and where scenic remains have been discovered. It must be realized that not only different localities in Greece but also different generations witnessed the building of these playhouses, and that, as a consequence, no two theatres are identically alike. There can thus be no absolute 'ideal' of a Greek theatre, although for convenience we may divide the existing buildings into three main types, recognizing that these types are used only to aid in our general survey and are not employed in any strict and narrow sense. The *classical Athenian* is the first of these types, and belongs to the fifth century B.C. Next comes the *Hellenistic*, so called because it is the type of playhouse erected from the fourth century onward, mostly in territories outside of Greece, but under the impress of Greek or Hellenic culture. It corresponds, in theatrical art, to that movement which, in history, is symbolized in the conquests of Alexander the Great. Finally, when the Greek civilization was coming to an end, it met with the rapidly spreading Roman ideas, and out of these two forces sprang a third type of theatre, which is usually called *Graeco-Roman*. Classical Athenian, Hellenistic, and Graeco-Roman playhouses are all distinct from one another, and must, as a consequence, be studied separately. Greatest literary interest undoubtedly attaches to the first because of its association with the masters of old Greek tragedy and comedy, but from the point of view of the student of the theatre the later types have equal, if not greater value, for it is a well-attested fact that, although mimic action (acting) comes before drama, the fuller development of scenic art is arrived at only after an age of great plays. No excuse, therefore, is offered for the relative portions of this book devoted to the three main forms of Greek playhouses.

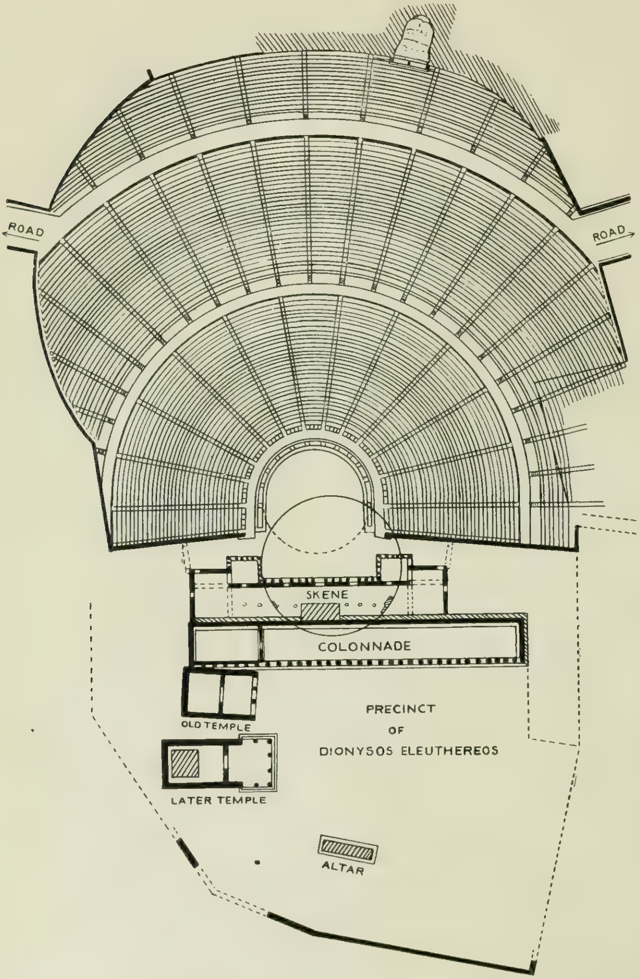

Fig. 2. The Lycurgos Theatre of Dionysos at Athens

The inner circle shows the position of the earliest orchestra.
From Flickinger, *The Greek Theater*, p. 64.

In any discussion concerning the nature of the first type, that in which the dramas of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides were produced, attention must first be drawn to the meagreness of the available information. The greater Greek dramatists reached their culmination by the middle of the fifth century B.C., yet only a few stones dating from that period exist among the ruins of the famous Dionysian theatre at Athens, while nearly all the theatres outside of Athens itself are of much later construction. Three sources of information only are open to us, each possessing grave disadvantages. (1) The literary evidence taken from the works of Vitruvius and Pollux is perhaps chief in value, partly because these are the only two writers who retained touch with the ancient Greek traditions, and partly because these two authors gave to Renascence architects almost all that was known in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of the classical stage. For several reasons, however, we must be on our guard when reading their books. In the first place, Vitruvius penned his famous work on classic architecture about the year 15 B.C., or four centuries at least after the time of Sophocles; while Pollux, whose *Onomastikon* contains so many valuable passages of information, lived in the second century A.D. It stands to reason that neither of these writers could speak with first-hand authority concerning that which interests us most—the antique theatre of Athens; while, in addition, we discover that even their remarks on the theatres of their own time, Graeco-Roman and Roman, partake of a decidedly idealistic tendency. The description of a Roman theatre in Vitruvius thus corresponds with no exactitude to the ruins found of playhouses belonging to that date. While Vitruvius and Pollux remain invaluable, therefore, they can in no wise be trusted when their views run counter to the weight of evidence gathered from other sources. (2) Second come the extant relics of the ancient theatres, but again the warning note must be sounded. We cannot permit ourselves to argue back from the more completely preserved playhouses of the second century B.C. to those of the fifth century. But a few sparse relics remain of the theatres of the latter date, and consequently we have to work largely on theory or on imaginative reconstruction, our ideas being framed largely by hints given to us from other sources. (3) Finally, and perhaps of chief importance, there is the evidence to be derived from the plays themselves. While of stage direction there is practically nothing, we must remember that these works were penned by practical dramatists and that unless our imaginary or reconstructed theatre is of such a form as to provide full opportunities for their production we must lay aside our most dearly treasured theories in favour of others more practical. Such a statement may seem a truism, yet only too many writers on this subject have erred through disregard of facts of this kind. Our object, therefore, must be to sift such scattered items of evidence as are presented to us by different authorities, and from a union of these items of evidence endeavour to re-envisage the theatres in which the tragedies and the comedies were played.

(ii) The Origins of Tragedy and of Comedy

Perhaps for our purpose a rapid glance at the origin and development of drama previous to the building of the first theatre may not be inopportune. Although theories are innumerable concerning this subject, and although hardly any two modern scholars hold identical views, the general movement toward the elaboration of dramatic form may be stated in broad outline. It is generally agreed that the origin of tragedy lies in the dithyramb sung in honour of Dionysos, the Bacchus of the Greeks; that this dithyramb was originally improvised and rhapsodical in essence; and that, as time passed by, it was 'poetized' or rendered literary, possibly by Arion of Methymna. The dithyramb was not confined to any one region of Greece, and the movement toward literary composition was one which probably saw developments in widely different regions, the whole coalescing in a type of formal chant, sung by the devotees of the god, and no doubt directed by one man as leader or guide. Then came Thespis, who, probably merely developing ideas which had come into existence before his time, elaborated the part of the leader, making him a genuine *actor* whose words were answered by the chanting chorus, and who turned to subjects not intimately connected with the stories of Dionysos. This was in the sixth century B.C.; the drama as such, and fundamentally if not outwardly dissociated from the worship of Dionysos, had been born. Only the further elaboration of dramatic forms and conventions was left to Aeschylus (525–456 B.C.), Sophocles (495–406 B.C.), and Euripides (480–406 B.C.), the masters of Greek tragic drama.[1]

Comedy had a similar development. It arose out of the less decorous mummery associated with the κῶμος (*comos*; the Latin *comus*), or voluntary procession organized by the townsfolk in honour of Dionysos and ending with a phallic song. Our 'comedy' is derived directly from this word κῶμος added to ᾠδή (*odē*, song). Apparently the *comos* revels consisted fundamentally of a procession, a sacrifice, and the final song; but, owing to the fact that the words of the *comos* revellers were often satiric, what had been originally the back chat of the crowd of onlookers became eventually part of the *comus* merriment itself, so that comedy, when at last it emerged as an independent entity, was distinguished from tragedy by the presence in it of two choruses instead of only one. The first form of true comedy, that to which has been given the title of Old, found its chief representative in Aristophanes (*c.* 448–388 B.C.). This Old Comedy was followed by the Middle Comedy (*c.* 375–325 B.C.), full of literary criticism and parody, while that in its turn was supplanted by the New Comedy—chiefly championed by Menander (342–291 B.C.)—in which domestic life was humorously drawn.

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[1] The presence of satyric plays as part of a series is explained as due to [illegible] departure from Dionysiac subject matter. Only two of these are extant—the Cyclops of Euripides and the Trackers of Sophocles.

(iii) The Ancient Athenian Theatre: Main Features

From this more than inadequate sketch of the rise of tragedy and comedy in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. two facts become evident. (1) Religion colours the whole of the drama, and as a consequence the drama appeals to the vast mass of the people. This is no class affair, but a form of art essentially popular and democratic. When theatres come to be built there is therefore the obvious necessity for ample standing, and later for ample sitting, room. The playhouses must be vast and capacious. (2) The chorus, both in tragedy and in comedy, as the very essence of each, remains the central element in drama. Consequently the theatres, when they are erected, must provide a considerable acting space, or, to speak more correctly, a considerable space in which the chorus could make those elaborate terpsichorean movements which always were associated with the verses of the lyric chants. The solution for both these necessary requirements was found in the selection of a hill-slope at the bottom of which was marked out a circle as the *ὀρχήστρα* (*orchestra*), with, in the centre, a *θυμέλη* (*thymele*, altar) erected in the honour of the god. The upper slope of the hill provided natural opportunities for the witnessing of the action. The bare hillside, then, with the round orchestra and the altar was the first theatre [1] known to the Greeks.

Starting from this simple arrangement, where a circular dancing-place was all that converted natural ground into an artificial theatre, the Greek playhouse easily and logically developed. The process is not difficult to follow. First came a few wooden seats toward the inner edge of the orchestra, designed for the principal men of the district or for honoured guests. These naturally would be arranged in a semicircle to follow the circumference of the dancing-place, and would form the commencement of a regular auditorium. From this stage to that in which wooden benches, or *ἴκρια* (*ikria*), arranged up the hillside, completed the auditorium, or to that in which stone seats supplanted the wooden benches, was of course but a simple step. It was the collapse of the wooden seats at Athens in 499 B.C. which led to the erection of a stone auditorium there. Obviously, owing to the fact that the hillside sloped only one way and that even in the most primitive form of drama there was one side to the action, these seats did not completely encircle the orchestra, but it was found that an unrestricted view of the actors was still possible when the seats were carried somewhat beyond an exact semicircle. Hence we reach the norm of the primitive Greek theatre—dancing-place and altar, seats arranged in an extended semicircle, with the terminating sides running obliquely to the diameter of the auditorium.

The excavations undertaken at Athens by Professor Dörpfeld have shown that in the original Dionysian theatre there the orchestra stood 50 feet to the south of the present orchestra and had a diameter of 78 feet.[2] As it was placed on the slope of the Acropolis itself the ground-level could not be obtained without banking up at the rear, which left a drop of some 6½ feet, beyond which stood the ancient Temple of Dionysos (Fig. 3). It is the fact that up to 465 this simple arrangement endured which explains the settings and some of the conventions in the earliest plays of Aeschylus. Thus the *Suppliants* (*c.* 490 B.C.), the *Persians* (472 B.C.), and *Prometheus Bound* (*c.* 470 B.C.) are all laid, in contradistinction to later plays, in open, desert countryside unflanked by any building, proving the non-existence then of any background. Aeschylus adapted these early plays to the requirements of the stage, just as later he and other playwrights made use of the scenic wall erected after 465 B.C. Still further, Aeschylus utilized for dramatic purposes the trench or drop formed at the rear edge of the orchestral circle. In *Prometheus Bound* a dummy figure was evidently used for the captive fire-bringer, and this figure at the close of the drama sank into the abyss, to give place to a live actor who ascended at the commencement of the lost *Prometheus Unbound*. The drop, inconvenient as it might seem, had provided an opportunity for Aeschylus, who, like all dramatic masters, realized that success could come only if all the physical conditions of his theatre were utilized for the purposes of art. In many other ways physical conditions which might well seem at first sight inconvenient or unadaptable to the purposes of dramatic art were freely made use of by the playwrights. Thus the fact that the performance of the dramas commenced usually at sunrise led to time references in the dialogue which made dramatic action and actual surroundings harmonize. In Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis* the setting starts with the last darkness before dawn. "What star is that there sailing?" asks Agamemnon, to which his attendant replies, "Sirius, in his middle height near the seven Pleiads riding." Some time later the dawn begins to break:

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[1] It may be noted that the word *θέατρον* (*theatron*, theatre) signified in Greek not a building or a stage, but what the Romans called the *cavea* and we the auditorium. *θέατρον* is derived from the verb *θεᾶσθαι* (*theasthai*, to see).

[2] The old orchestra is shown in Fig. 2.

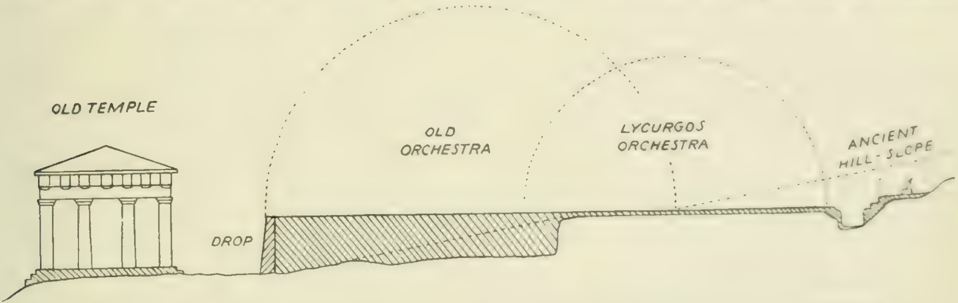

Fig. 3. CROSS-SECTION THROUGH THE OLD AND NEW ORCHESTRAS AT ATHENS
The drop at the rear of the former should be noted.

> That silver light
> Shows the approach of morn, the harbinger
> Of the sun's fiery steeds.

The rest of the action takes place in the broad light of day. What an effect this synchronization of dramatic setting and actual physical phenomena must have had may well be imagined.

(iv) THE SCENE-BUILDINGS AND STAGE

With the advent of two and later of three actors whom the necessities of the drama constrained to perform in a diversity of parts it became imperative that a hut should be erected for the convenience of the performers. In Athens the close proximity of the old temple of Dionysos would have rendered the building of such a hut or dressing-room almost impossible, and it is probable that about this date the ancient orchestra was moved 50 feet northward, leaving a space at the back which had been formerly part of the dancing space. On this ground was erected, about the year 465 B.C., a small wooden σκηνή (*skene*, scene-building),[1] designed originally as a mere dressing-room, but soon found to offer many opportunities when considered as a scenic background. It is from this time that plays, instead of being set in some open country, are presumed to take place before a temple or a palace. What this early scene-building looked like we cannot tell; unpretentious undoubtedly it was, presenting in all probability a plain front unadorned save for possible paintings erected to symbolize the scenic action. Within a few years, however, something more ornate had been planned and executed. About 425 B.C. a firm stone basis was laid for an elaborate scene-building consisting of a long front wall interrupted at the sides by projecting wings or παρασκήνια (*paraskenia*). Between these projecting wings we may suppose that there existed a very low stage, possibly raised but a foot from the orchestra level, yet providing that elevation which actors of all ages and of all climes have sought and used. Immediately behind this stage may have come a columned προσκήνιον (*proskenion*, proscenium), built of wood like the rest of the scene-building.[1] The front wall of the scene-building itself was probably pierced by three doors for the exits and the entrances of the actors.

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[1] While σκηνή regularly signified the scene building or dressing hut, it was also used at a later date to [illegible] the [illegible] and the scenic decorations. Obviously our word 'scene' is derived from it.

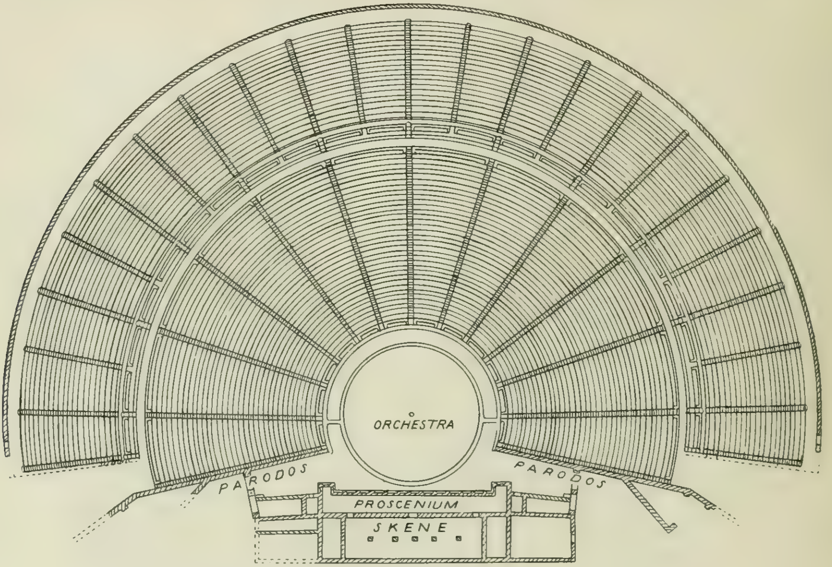

Fig. 4. PLAN OF THE THEATRE AT EPIDAUROS

After Dörpfeld-Reisch.

It is obvious that this scene-building, often extending to beyond the diameter of the orchestral circle, nearly met the oblique lines formed by the seats in the auditorium. In other words, a passageway was made at each side by the edge of the auditorium and the ends of the scene-building. These passageways, used by both chorus and spectators, gained the name of πάροδος (*parodos*), and were in later times adorned with richly sculptured gates.

In all probability the wooden scene-building thus erected on a stone foundation at the end of the fifth century B.C. was of two stories, the upper of which was the ἐπισκήνιον (*episkenion*) and was utilized for the 'machines,' of which an account will be given below. It is likely that the slightly raised stage was called the λογεῖον (*logeion*, speaking-place), although that word and the term θεολογεῖον (*theologeion*, speaking-place of divinities) have both been applied to the top of the proscenium or first story of the scene-building itself. By the time that the scene-building was thus elaborated and sometimes constructed of stone, the regular palace convention for tragedy had become fully established, to pass on in imitative forms to the dramatists of the Renascence.

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[1] The word προσκήνιον was used in various senses. Sometimes it was applied to the stage (*i.e.*, that which was προ or in front of the σκηνή); sometimes it signified the decorative wall in front of the σκηνή (*i.e.*, the back wall in front of which the actors performed). The latter sense is used here. (See *infra*, p. 30, n.)

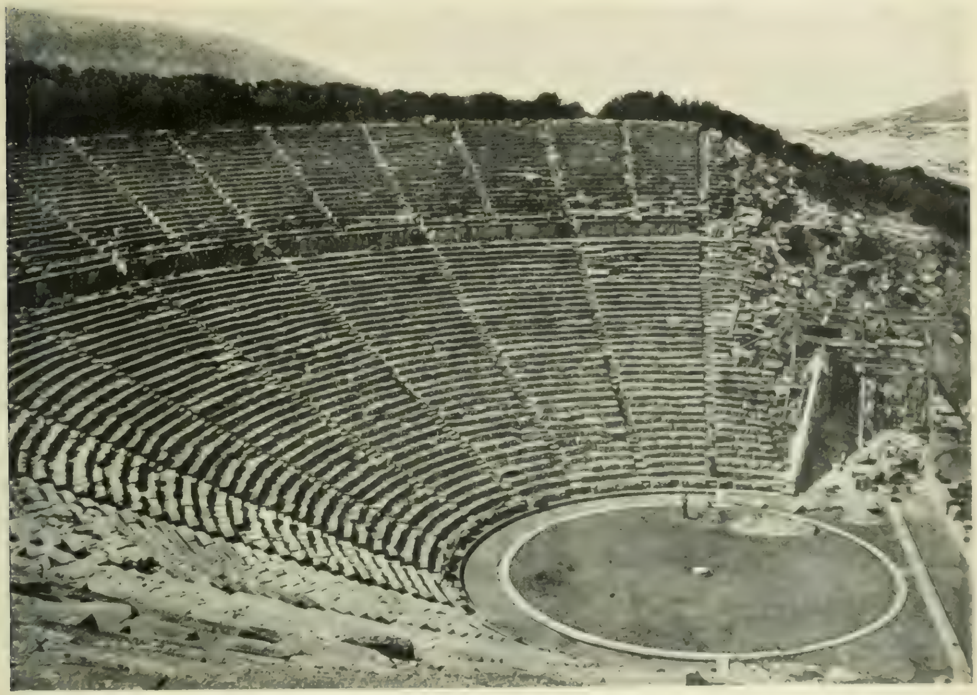

Fig. 5. The Theatre at Epidauros

This theatre is among the best preserved and the most beautiful of the earlier type

Photo L. P. Co.

(v) The Hellenistic Theatre

The simple arrangement described above, consisting of round orchestra, *parodoi*, rectangular *skene* with projecting *paraskenia*, and low platform or stage, is all we can confidently assert for the earliest Athenian playhouse. Attempts have recently been made to deny to it, and to later theatres, any raised stage at all, but the phrases used by Aristophanes[1] as well as those used by Aristotle[2] seem to prove definitely that there was some slight erection at Athens for the use of the actors.

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[1] ἀναβαίνειν (to go up) and καταβαίνειν (to go down).

[2] ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς (upon the stage) and [illegible] (from the stage).

but sufficiently low to allow of free intercourse between the chorus on the orcheſtra level and the actors proper. Nor can there be any reasonable doubt that the Hellenistic and Graeco-Roman playhouses boasted stages of an increasingly ornate kind.

Some half a score of fairly well preserved theatres, in addition to the reconstructed portions of the Athenian Theatre of Dionysos, reveal to us the main features of the Hellenistic type. Epidauros, Eretria, Oropos, Delos, Priene, all possess playhouses which, in spite of many divergencies, present to us the realization of a common ideal or plan. Each one has an orchestra, either completely circular as at Epidauros or capable of being continued circularly as at Priene. Each too has an auditorium which stretches slightly over a semicircle, the edges of the seats at the side of the *parodoi* forming a sharp angle with the front of the *skene*. So far all agree. Each has a *skene* with various parts, and it is at this point we must pause to consider the common qualities and the divergencies in those theatres when considered as a group. For this purpose we may glance at particular examples. In the beautifully symmetrical theatre at Epidauros, described by Pausanias as the most perfect in Greece, we have a playhouse begun under the direction of the younger Polyclitus in the fourth century B.C. and added to or altered in the two following centuries (Figs. 4 and 5). Here the *skene* is a rectangular building, divided into one large and two smaller rooms. Some few feet in front runs a set of half-columns of the Ionic order, roughly 11 feet 7 inches in height and 8 feet 8 inches from the front wall of the *skene*. At the ends there are two small projections (*paraskenia*), and a ramp or sloping ascent connects the extreme edges of the top of the

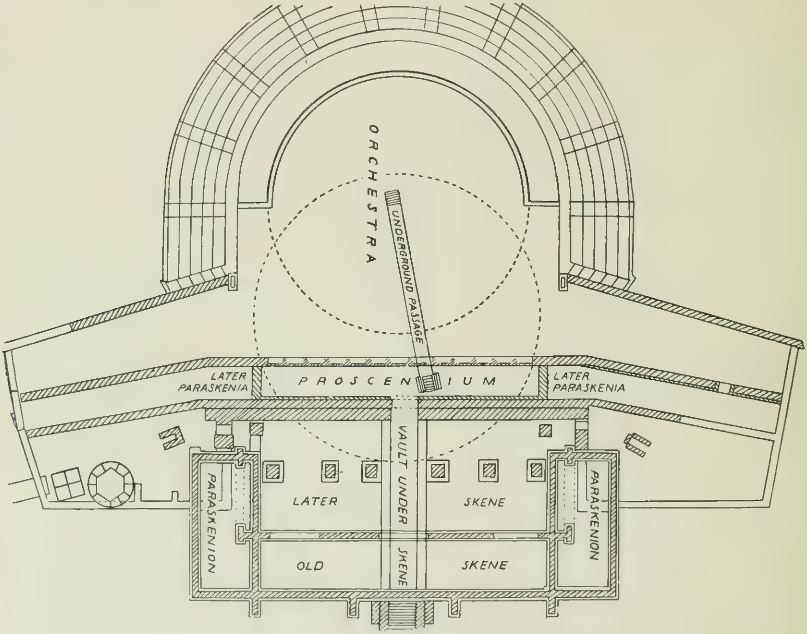

Fig. 6. PLAN OF THE THEATRE AT ERETRIA

Note should be taken of the old passageway leading to "Charon's steps" in the centre of the orcheſtra.

row of columns with the beautifully proportioned gateways which stand at the openings of the *parodoi*.

At Eretria in Euboea the theatre also dates from the fourth century B.C., although all traces of the original scene-buildings have disappeared (Figs. 6 and 7). Some time about 300 B.C. and again in the first century B.C. its *skene* was altered. The first arrangement consisted of a rectangular scene-room with a row of columns flanked by two fairly large *paraskenia*. The second had the rectangular scene-room as before, but the columns, some 11 feet 6 inches high, continued straight across until they were met by side-walls which were continued along the *parodoi*.

Of later date is the theatre of Oropos in Attica, which was erected during the second or first century B.C. (Fig. 8). Here the formation of the scene-buildings corresponds more or less exactly to those at Eretria. The columns, of the Doric order, stretch at a distance of some 10 feet from the front wall of the *skene* and are met by side-walls which slope off directly along the *parodoi*. The height of the columns, together with the entablature, is 8 feet 2 inches.

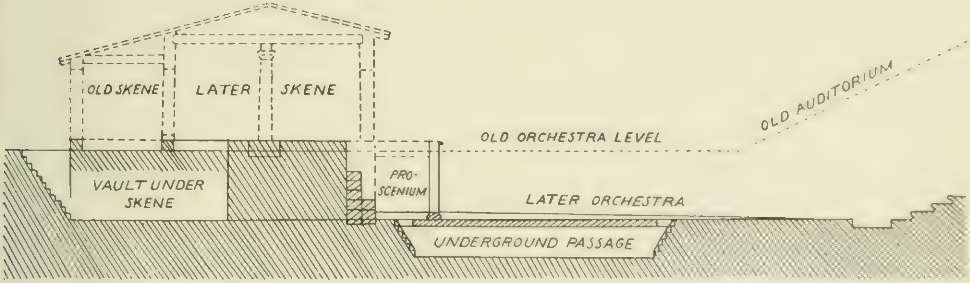

Fig. 7. CROSS-SECTION OF THE THEATRE AT ERETRIA

Comparison with Fig. 6 shows clearly the arrangement of the underground passage.

At Delos the columns, which are peculiarly carried right round the four walls of the *skene*, are 8 feet 3 inches high and set some 9 feet 10 inches from the wall of the scene-building (Fig. 9). In spite of later remodelling the original scene-buildings can be discerned in the theatre at Priene (Fig. 10). Here were ten Doric half-columns with two corner-pieces, the height being 8 feet 8 inches and the distance from the wall of the *skene* 8 feet 10 inches. So at Ephesus, where later Roman work has remodelled the whole, the Hellenistic *skene*, nearly 44 yards long, had in front a row of columns 8 feet 6 inches high and 9 feet 10 inches distant from the *skene* wall.

Finally one may look at the reconstructions undertaken during the second century B.C. in the Dionysian theatre at Athens. At this time the *paraskenia* were drawn back some 6 feet, and a series of stone columns, 13 feet high, was built about 9 feet from the front of the scene-building. This theatre, as indeed all the others, had a fairly lofty *episkenion* rising above the *skene* itself.

(vi) THE PROSCENIUM AND STAGE OF THE HELLENISTIC STYLE

In the theatres which have been briefly dealt with in the preceding section we have found as a common factor the presence of a series of pillars, at the most 13 feet high, but chiefly about 9 feet, placed some 8 or 10 feet from the scene-building and normally enclosed either by the *paraskenia* or by the abutting wall from the side of the *skene* itself. According to the view of Dorpfeld and others the actors stood on the ground-level with the columns behind them, and over that the

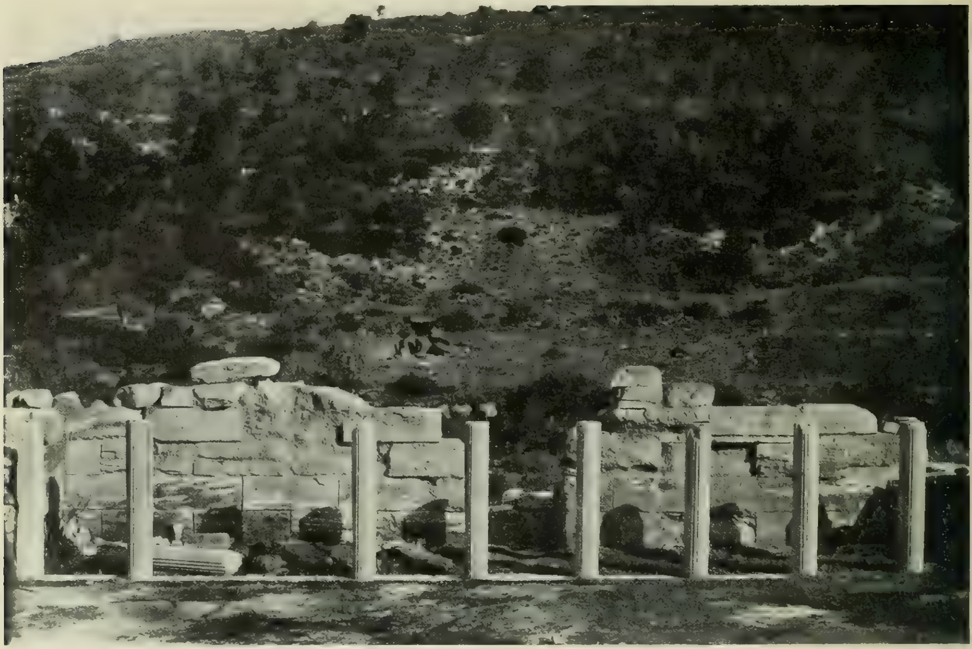

Fig. 8. The Skene of the Theatre at Oropos
The proscenium pillars and the front wall of the scene-building are here shown.
Photo Deutsches Archaeologisches Institut.

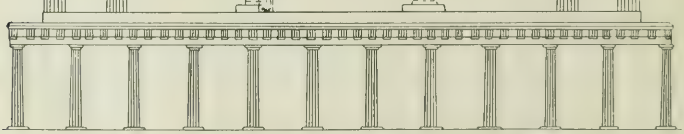

Fig. 9. Reconstruction of the Stage at Delos
After Navarre, *Le Théâtre Grec*, p. 72.

towering height of the *episkenion*. Several facts, however, make us pause ere we accept this view. (1) The actor with his *κόθορνος* (*kothornos*, cothurnus) and *ὄγκος* (*onkos*)[1] must have stood well over 7 feet in height. Even the 13 feet of the Hellenistic stage at Athens was hardly imposing enough

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[1] See *infra*, p. 39.

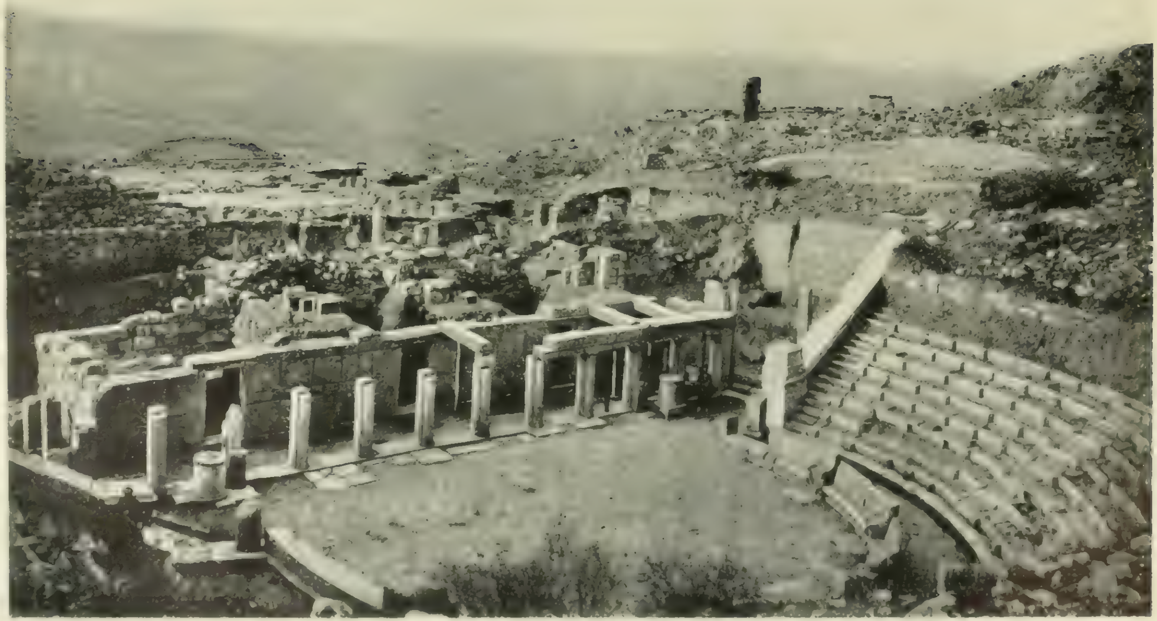

Fig. 12. The Theatre at Priene

From Wiegand, *Priene*, Plate XVI

to correspond with his appearance, and the top of his head must have been nearly level with the architrave over the columns in some theatres. (2) These columns, placed close together, frequently show no trace of doors, whereas doors are freely provided in the *episkenion*. (3) *Pinakes*, or painted boards, were undoubtedly placed between the proscenium pillars. Dörpfeld assumes that these served as scenery, but if this was their purpose surely the effect presented must have been ludicrous, for each *pinax*, or panel, was sometimes no larger than 8 feet by 5 feet. (4) Evidence as to the real nature of these front *pinakes* is provided by some records of money payments in connexion with the theatre at Delos. It is found there that the carpenter who made *one* of such *pinakes* was paid no less than 30 drachmae[1], whereas the painter who dealt with *two* of them received only 3 drachmae 1 obol.[2] The obvious implication is that the proscenium *pinax* was painted, not representationally, but merely with a wash of colour or at the most a formal design. (5) The stage at Epidauros shows an incline running to the top of the columns. It is assumed by Dörpfeld that the space at the top (made into a platform with wooden boards) was used only by divinities, but if this was the case the erection of the incline seems hardly to have been necessary. In itself it suggests that the platform so provided was used regularly by impersonators of ordinary characters in the dramas of the time.

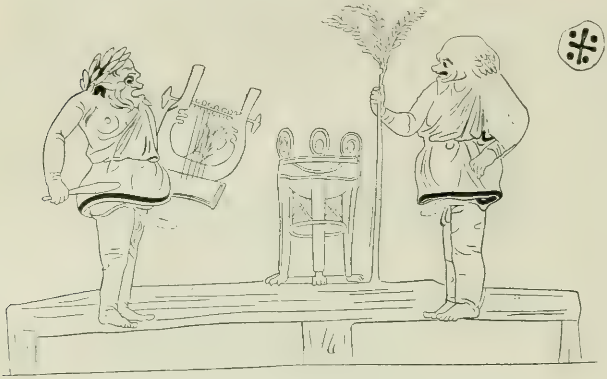

Fig. 11. Scene from a Phlyax Comedy
Note should be taken of the plain wooden stage.
From Baumeister, *Denkmäler des klassischen Altertums*, iii, No. 1827.

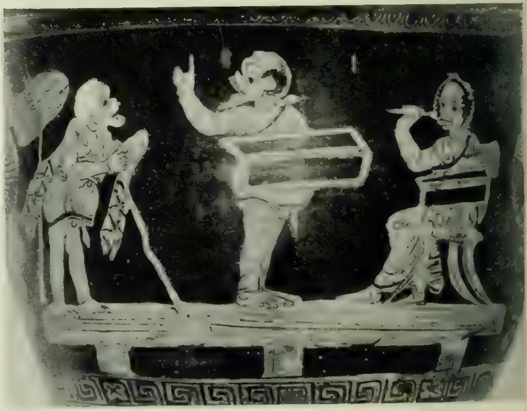

Fig. 12. Scene from a Phlyax Comedy
From the original in the Petrograd (Leningrad) Museum.

Irresistibly, therefore, we are driven back from the acting-ground-level theory, and have to presuppose a wooden stage built on the top of the pillars, the *pinakes* being merely wooden panels, painted perhaps in simple colour, erected between the pillars to form a complete wall. Almost at once light is thrown on the subject by a comparison between this hypothetical stage and some vase-paintings depicting scenes of that farcical comedy of Magna Graecia known as the Phlyakes.

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[1] *Θεοδότῳ πίνακα εἰς τὸ προσκήνιον ποιήσαντι μισθὸς δραχμαὶ ΔΔΔ* ("To Theodotos for making one *pinax* in the *proskenion*, 30 drachmae"). Here *proskenion* is used to refer to the row of columns in front of the skene. See *supra*, p. 22.

[2] *Ἡρακλείδῃ εἰς τὸ προσκήνιον γράψαντι πίνακας δύο μισθὸς δραχμαὶ* ⊢⊢⊢ I ("To Herakleides for painting two *pinakes* in the *proskenion*, 3 drachmae 1 obol").

Fig. 11 shows one of these. Attention may be drawn to the wooden platform and the obviously wooden supports. Similar wooden supports are delineated in Fig. 12. Next we may take Fig. 13, which clearly shows a burlesque of heroic drama. Here a wooden platform, supported by wooden props, is filled in with panels on which is painted a purely formal design. Steps lead from the stage-level to the ground. The wooden platform occurs again in Fig. 14, but here the place of the panels is taken by draped curtains. Finally, in Fig. 15 we reach the conclusion. Here the stage is not so clearly of wood, and formal pillars have taken the place of rough-hewn or square props. Behind the actors appear what look like larger painted panels on the proscenium or, as it is sometimes styled, the ***episkenion***. The evidence of these scenes from the Phlyakes seems complete. But, it may be said, how could the actors and the chorus have intercourse if there was this high stage of from 7 to 10 feet in height? The answer is twofold. Firstly, such intercourse, by the later centuries, was hardly necessary. By the third and second centuries the tragedy chorus had practically disappeared, while in comedy the choral odes had degenerated into mere detached entertainments. Secondly, there is always the possibility that a flight of steps led from the stage to the orchestra-level. Such steps are indicated in the vase-paintings mentioned above. Pollux [1] distinctly declares that the stage, the locality of the actors, was connected with the orchestra, the locality of the chorus, in this manner,[2] and steps are to be found in at least one theatre of Roman style.

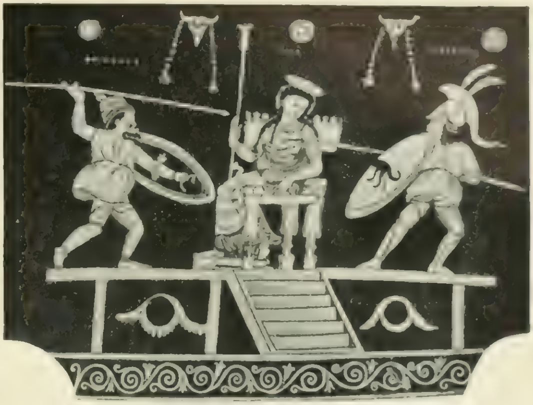

Fig. 13. Scene from a Phlyax Comedy

From the British Museum *Guide to Greek and Roman Life.*

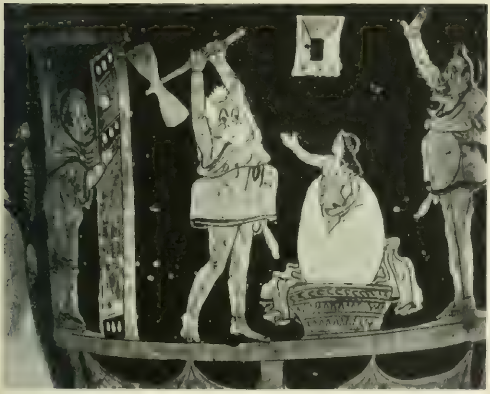

Fig. 14. Scene from a Phlyax Comedy

Note should be taken of the platform stage and of the decorated doorway.

From Bieber, *Denkmäler des Theaterwesens im Altertum.*

For the Hellenistic theatre, therefore, we have the following characteristics:

(1) A circular orchestra, or an orchestra capable of being extended in a circular form.

(2) An auditorium slightly larger than a semicircle.

(3) A rectangular *skene* usually divided into various rooms, and with from one to three doorways in the front wall of the second story.

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[1] The quotations from Pollux, save for one or two minor deviations, are from the edition published at Leipzig in 1824: *Iulii Pollucis Onomasticon cum Annotationibus Interpretum, curavit Gulielmus Dindorfius.*

[2] εἰσελθόντες δὲ κατὰ τὴν ὀρχήστραν, ἐπὶ τὴν σκηνὴν διὰ κλιμάκων ἀναβαίνουσι ("Mounting from the orchestra to the stage, they ascend by means of steps") (*Onomastikon*, iv, 127).

(4) A series of pillars with panels set between, situate some 8 to 10 feet in front of the *skene*.
(5) A resultant stage normally 9 feet high and about 8 to 10 feet deep, stretching the entire length of the *skene*.
(6) An *episkenion* or *proskenion*[1] usually pierced by three doors, which, as will be seen later, had each a definite significance.

(vii) GRAECO-ROMAN THEATRES

To a certain number of theatres, notably those at Termessos, Sagalassos, Patara, Myra, Tralles, Magnesia, and Ephesus (in the altered form), has been given the title Graeco-Roman, these theatres displaying a combination, as it were, of Greek and Roman characteristics. It may be simplest, perhaps, to take the main features of these playhouses and consider them together. (1) In the first place, the auditorium for the most part still retained its old form, stretching beyond the regular semicircle (Fig. 16). (2) The orchestra, which had been completely circular in purely Greek hands, was encroached on by the scene-buildings, but always remained more than a semicircle (Figs. 16 and 17). In many of these theatres the orchestra if carried round in a complete circle would touch with its circumference the front of the scene-building proper, the stage jutting forward for about half its radius. (3) The lowest row of seats usually abutted directly on the orchestra, although this is by no means an invariable rule. (4) The stage-front was changed and the background elaborated. These are the most important points and require greater consideration.

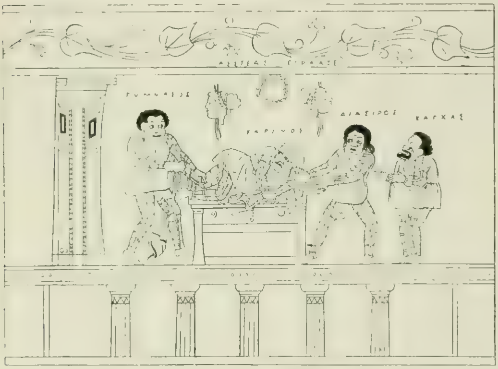

Fig. 15. SCENE FROM A PHLYAX COMEDY

Note should be taken of the formal stage supports and the suggestion of scenery.

From Baumeister, *op. cit.*, iii, No. 1830.

The dramatic fare in the Graeco-Roman theatres consisted mainly of comedy, and comedy of the type which deals with ordinary life. It is clear that this would demand greater verisimilitude, and that the columns supporting the Hellenistic stage might well seem out of place. As a consequence the normal frontage of the stage in a Graeco-Roman theatre was perfectly plain, or merely panelled, broken by two or three doors leading on to the orchestra-level. In height this stage was not quite so great as had been those of the Hellenistic style. A drop of a few feet is noticeable in almost all, and there is nothing so high as the Hellenistic stage at Athens. On the other hand, the depth is generally very much greater, reaching even to 20 feet. This, of course, is exactly what might have been expected, as the Hellenistic stage, although it was of plentiful length, was often extremely narrow.

Most characteristic of the Graeco-Roman theatre, however, was the elaborate scenic façade. Instead of a comparatively bare scene-building wall pierced with doors we find many varieties of architectural adornment. At Termessos it takes the form of a series of pillars set on a solid foundation and broken by three doors (Fig. 17). At Ephesus varied architectural embellishment reaching to three stories makes a lofty and conventional background for the actors. There seven doors of entrance were provided, a large one in the centre flanked at each side by three of diminishing height. It is quite obvious that in these playhouses the stage and the 'setting' have grown to possess an almost dominating importance (Fig. 18). By this time Roman influence had come to oversway that of ancient Athens, and these Graeco-Roman playhouses form a fitting link between the Theatre of Dionysos and the theatre at Orange.

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[1] In view of the later use of the word 'proscenium' it is perhaps better to use that term here for the wall at the back of the actors, which, according to this reconstruction of the Hellenistic theatre, would be that of the second story of the *skene*. As we have seen, the word *proskenion* is frequently used to indicate (1) the stage and (2) (more frequently) the row of pillars in front of the *skene*. This use, however, was not continued to later times, and may give rise to considerable confusion. The term ὑποσκήνιον (*hyposkenion*) or under-stage was evidently applied both to the space beneath the stage and to the row of pillars on which the stage was supported.

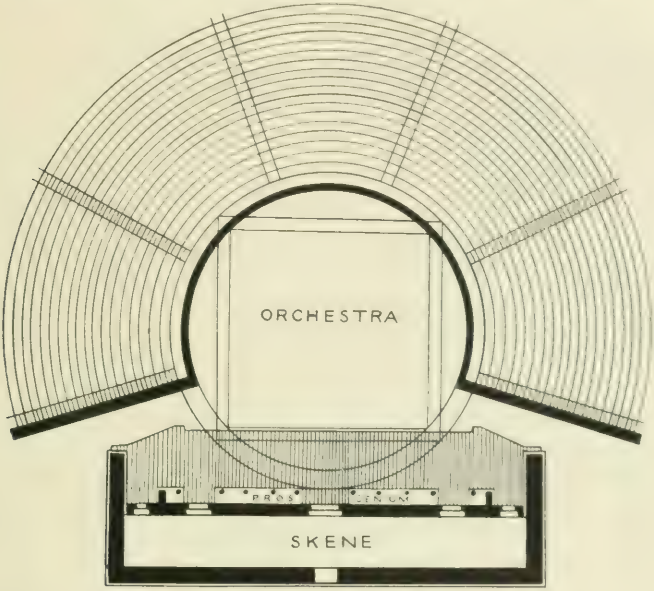

Fig. 16. Plan of the Graeco-Roman Theatre at Termessos

Redrawn from Flickinger, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

(viii) Machines

Although all these theatres were open-air structures the performances given there were not entirely without scenic embellishment; machines and even scenery were utilized much more freely than one might have imagined possible. Pollux provides us with a list of some nineteen theatrical devices, and, although his account is exceedingly meagre, we can divine from it that scenic effects of a kind were regularly secured both in tragedy and in comedy. Some indication must now be given of the nature of these devices.

In the first place Pollux indicates the conventional nature of the three main doors in the background. The middle door, usually larger than the others, was the 'royal' entrance. It was regarded as the doorway of a palace or was presumed to belong to the protagonist in the drama.[1] That on the right was the door by which the second actor entered, or was supposed to lead to guest-chambers,[2] while that on the left belonged to a minor person, or formed a fictitious ruined temple, desert, or prison.[3] These were the doors which led directly into supposedly actual buildings, and for persons who were presumed to come from a place outside the two doors in the side-wings, or *paraskenia*, had to suffice, one leading toward the forum, the other to the outskirts of the city.[4]

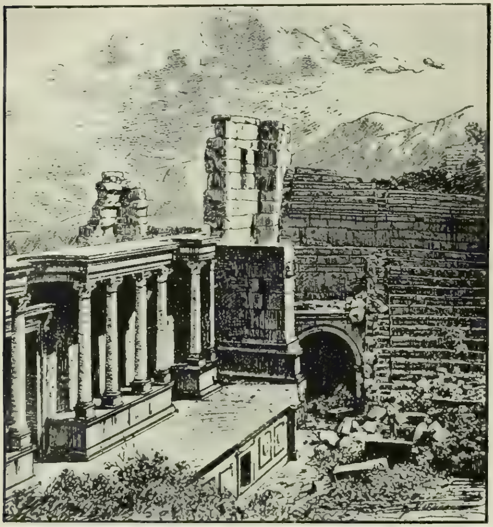

Fig. 17. THE THEATRE AT TERMESSOS

After Lanckoroński, *Städte Pamphyliens und Pisidiens.*

These doors were, of course, permanent scenic features, and provided what may be styled symbolic or conventional settings, but besides that something must have been attempted in the way of representational effects. Vitruvius[5] declares that Aeschylus invented scene-painting, while Aristotle[6] ascribes the credit of this to Sophocles. Painted scenes of some kind, therefore, must have been in use, and we may assume that these came into existence at a time when the activities of these two dramatists coalesced, or, in other words, at some period immediately previous to 458 B.C. We have evidence that *pinakes* were used not merely to fill in the spaces between the proscenium pillars, but for the purpose of providing a scenic background. Some of these may have been fixed to the wall behind the actors, but normally they seem to have been attached to the περίακτοι (*periaktoi*), which are described for us by Pollux and Vitruvius.[7] These seem to have been triangular prisms, on each side of which was painted a certain scene. Placed on a central pivot, they could thus be revolved in order to display a change of scene. Probably they were fitted with a small ledge which could, if need be, accommodate the god who, in Vitruvius' words, is to appear with sound of "sudden thunder." The exact position of the *periaktoi* has not yet been definitely determined, but it would seem probable that they stood in or by the two side-doorways—a suggestion which corresponds with the conventional significance of these doors, for the *periaktos* on the left displayed distant country scenes, while that on the right showed parts of the city.[1]

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[1] τριῶν δέ, τῶν κατὰ τὴν σκηνὴν θυρῶν, ἡ μέση μὲν βασίλειον ἢ σπήλαιον, ἢ οἶκος ἔνδοξος ἢ πᾶν τοῦ πρωταγωνιστοῦ τοῦ δράματος (*Onomastikon*, iv, 124). Vitruvius speaks also of the *aulae regiae*. The convention cited by Pollux, whereby the doors belonged to definite characters, has a peculiar parallel in medieval times. Is the latter a relic of the mime tradition?

[2] ἡ δὲ δεξιά, τοῦ δευτεραγωνιστοῦντος καταγώγιον· . . . ἐν δὲ τραγῳδίᾳ ἡ μὲν δεξιὰ θύρα ξενών ἐστιν (*op. cit.*, iv, 124–125). Vitruvius classes both the right and left doors as *hospitalia*.

[3] ἡ δὲ ἀριστερὰ τὸ εὐτελέστατον ἔχει πρόσωπον ἢ ἱερὸν ἐξηρημωμένον, . . . ἢ ἄοικός ἐστιν. ἐν δὲ τραγῳδίᾳ . . . εἱρκτὴ ἡ λαιά (*op. cit.*, iv, 124–125).

[4] παρ' ἑκάτερα δὲ τῶν δύο θυρῶν τῶν περὶ τὴν μέσην ἄλλαι δύο εἶεν ἂν μία ἑκατέρωθεν, πρὸς ἃς αἱ περίακτοι συμπεπήγασιν (*op. cit.*, iv, 126). Vitruvius refers to these: "Secundum ea loca versurae sunt procurrentes, quae efficiunt una a foro, altera a peregre, aditus in scaenam" (v, 6).

[5] *Op. cit.*, vii, Praefatio § 11.

[6] *Poetics*, 1449 A, 18.

[7] καταβλήματα δέ, ὑφάσματα, ἢ πίνακες ἦσαν, ἔχοντες γραφὰς τῇ χρείᾳ τῶν δραμάτων προσφόρους· κατεβάλλετο δὲ ἐπὶ τὰς περιάκτους (Pollux, *op. cit.*, iv, 131).

"Secundum autem spatia ad ornatus comparata, quae loca Graeci περιάκτους dicunt ab eo, quod machinae sunt in his locis versatiles trigonoe habentes singulares species ornationis, quae, cum aut fabularum mutationes sunt futurae, seu deorum adventus cum tonitribus repentinis, versentur mutentque speciem ornationis in fronte" (Vitruvius, *op. cit.*, v, 6).

More important still is a consideration of the machines regularly employed at least in the Hellenistic period, and here Pollux becomes our principal guide. (1) First comes the *ἐκκύκλημα* (*ekkuklema*).[2] Described by Pollux as a platform upon which a throne is set and obviously derived from the verb *ἐκκυκλεῖν* (*ekkuklein*, 'to roll out'), it was clearly some device whereby the result of interior action, such as dead bodies after a murder, could be shown. Many references to it are made both in the plays themselves and by later commentators, and considerable discussion has been devoted to it by modern scholars. A view which is commonly held gives to it a semicircular shape, so that the low platform could be swung out at any of the three main stage-doors. (2) Evidently associated with this machine is the *ἐξώστρα* (*exostra*), which Pollux identifies with the *ekkuklema*.[3] It is possible that the machine indicated here was a low platform, not revolved as the *ekkuklema*, but pushed out on wheels or rollers. (3) Still more common was the machine proper, or *μηχανή* (*mechane*), described by quite a number of classical writers.[4] This appears to have consisted of a hook and pulley set at the very top of the *skene* to the left-hand side of the stage. By its means divinities could be raised or lowered. Examples of its use are numerous after about 430 B.C., when, no doubt, it was introduced in a perfected form. Aristophanes hangs Socrates in a basket by its help in the *Clouds*, while a similar device is to be noted in the *Birds*. In tragedy it seems implied in at least two plays of Aeschylus, and occurs frequently in Euripides. It is from this use of the *mechane* that there arose the phrase *θεὸς ἀπὸ μηχανῆς*, repeated in Latin as *deus ex machina*, which, originally applied solely to the physical appearance of the divinity, came to signify a dramatic device introduced for the purpose of bringing a problem or an action to a swift, and often to an unsatisfactorily artificial, conclusion.

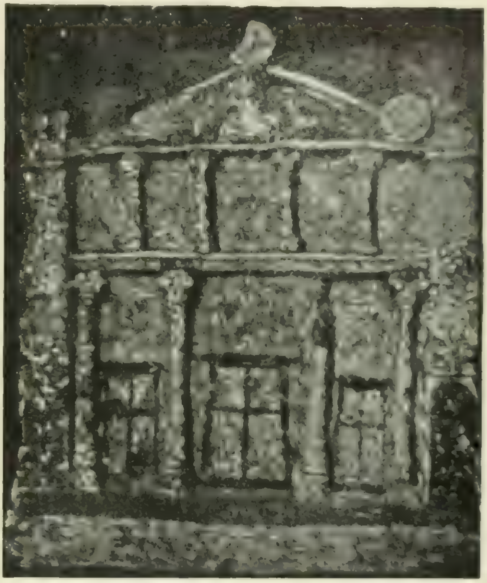

Fig. 18. TERRA-COTTA RELIEF SHOWING A STAGE WALL.

From Ernst R. Fiechter, *Die baugeschichtliche Entwicklung des antiken Theaters: Eine Studie.* 132 Seiten Text und 144 Abbildungen auf 43 Tafeln. C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, München, [illegible].

The *mechane* possibly appeared under a variety of different names. Thus Pollux enumerates also (4) the *theologeion*, (5) the crane, and (6) the suspension machine, while Suidas, as we have seen, suggests ἑώρημα as a synonym for the *mechane*. Concerning the *theologeion* opinions differ; by some it is thought to have been merely an upper platform, by others it is assumed to have been a regular piece of theatrical machinery. Pollux says little to guide us save that here gods made their appearance. The crane (γέρανος) seems to have been a machine used for swifter effect, particularly employed when a body had to be snatched from the stage.[1] The suspension machine (αἰῶραι, *aiorai*) may simply be a name for the ropes by which divinities were suspended in the air, but was probably distinguished from the *mechane* by the fact that the ropes were invisible and that there was no platform.[2] Finally (7) Pollux mentions as the equivalent of the *mechane* in comedy the *krade* (κράδη), or 'fig-branch';[3] this is referred to also by Plutarch.

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[1] *παρ' ἑκάτερα δὲ τῶν δύο θυρῶν τῶν περὶ τὴν μέσην ἄλλαι δύο εἶεν ἄν, μία ἑκατέρωθεν,* [illegible] *ἔξω πόλεως δηλοῦσα, ἡ δὲ ἑτέρα τὰ ἐκ πόλεως, μάλιστα τὰ ἐκ λιμένος* [illegible] *μηχανὴ φέρειν ἀδυνατεῖ. εἰ δ' ἐπιστραφεῖεν αἱ περίακτοι, ἡ δεξιὰ μὲν ἀμείβει* [illegible] It has already been seen that the *pinakes* were sometimes merely panels connecting the [illegible] carefully distinguished from the scenic panels. The former were probably painted [illegible]

[2] *καὶ τὸ μὲν ἐκκύκλημα, ἐπὶ ξύλων ὑψηλὸν βάθρον, ᾧ ἐπίκειται θρόνος·* [illegible] *ῥῆμα τοῦ ἔργου καλεῖται ἐκκυκλεῖν. ἐφ' οὗ δὲ εἰσάγεται τὸ ἐκκύκλημα,* [illegible] *οἱονεὶ καθ' ἑκάστην οἰκίαν* (*op. cit.*, IV, 128).

[3] [illegible]

[4] *ἡ μηχανὴ δὲ θεοὺς δείκνυσι, καὶ ἥρως τοὺς ἐν ἀέρι . . . καὶ κεῖται κατὰ* [illegible] Suidas declares it was also called the *ἐώρημα* (*eorema*). The hook at the top was the [illegible] See Haigh, *The Attic Theatre*, p. 209.

A peculiar machine is suggested by Pollux when he deals (8) with the *skope* (σκοπή), which he tells us is made for those who view the action. It seems probable here that he is referring to a particular vantage-point from which the 'director' could supervise the play being performed below. (9) Little information is given us of the 'wall' (τεῖχος, *teichos*) save that it and (10) the tower (πύργος, *purgos*) were raised parts from which persons might look down upon the stage. It may have been that these were lofty practicable platforms. (11) The beacon-tower (φρυκτώριον, *phruktorion*), as Pollux notes, indicates its purpose in its very name. (12) The *distegia* (διστεγία), literally 'the second floor,' provided the means whereby actors could mount to the roof of a house and thence survey the characters below.[4] (13) The κεραυνοσκοπεῖον (*keraunoskopeion*), or 'lightning-machine,' is described by Pollux merely as a kind of *periaktos*.[5] It may have been, as Weismann conjectured, a prism with the three sides coloured black, across each of which was painted a lightning-flash. (14) With it naturally goes the βροντεῖον (*bronteion*), or 'thunder-machine'; this machine consisted of jars filled with stones, the latter being poured noisily into a vessel of brass.[6] (15) The 'semicircle,' says Pollux, is sufficiently indicated by its name. It stood by the orchestra and gave a view of a far-distant landscape—a portion of a city or sailors upon the sea.[7] The description seems to suggest some kind of a cyclorama. (16) The στροφεῖον (*stropheion*), which from its name seems to have been a revolving machine, showed Heroes who had been taken into the company of the gods, or those who had met their deaths by sea or in battle.[8] (17) 'Charon's steps' must simply have been trap-doors, possibly in the orchestra, through which ghosts and spirits made their appearance, a simple device, elaborated perhaps in the (18) ἀναπιέσματα (*anapiesmata*), which apparently raised the spirits mechanically from the deeps.[9]

Perhaps scholars have not made quite as much of these machines as they deserve. It is true that we are unaware when the majority of these came into being, but we have the testimony of Pollux, supported by many other scattered authorities, that they existed at one period or another during the career of the Greek or Graeco-Roman theatre. Their importance lies in the facts that they show the Greek stage-managers to have been almost as eager as managers of to-day to secure spectacular effects, and that these passages of Pollux were eagerly conned by the theatre innovators of the Renascence. Perhaps a performance in an ancient theatre was not so statuesque, so innocent of purely 'theatrical' devices as sometimes we think; by these machines it was put in touch with the theatres of the modern world.

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[1] ἡ δὲ γέρανος μηχάνημά ἐστιν ἐκ μετεώρου καταφερόμενον ἐφ' ἁρπαγῇ σώματος, ᾧ κέχρηται Ἠὼς ἁρπάζουσα τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Μέμνονος (*op. cit.*, iv, 130).

[2] αἰώρας δ' ἂν εἴποις τοὺς κάλως οἳ κατήρτηνται ἐξ ὕψους ἀνέχειν τοὺς ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀέρος φέρεσθαι δοκοῦντας ἥρως ἢ θεούς (*op. cit.*, iv, 131).

[3] ὃ δὲ ἐν τραγῳδίᾳ μηχανή, τοῦτο ἐν κωμῳδίᾳ κράδη (*op. cit.*, iv, 128).

[4] ἡ δὲ διστεγία ποτὲ μὲν ἐν οἴκῳ βασιλείῳ διῆρες δωμάτιον, οἷον ἀφ' οὗ ἐν Φοινίσσαις ἡ Ἀντιγόνη βλέπει τὸν στρατόν, ποτὲ δὲ καὶ κέραμος, ἀφ' οὗ βάλλουσι τῷ κεράμῳ. ἐν δὲ κωμῳδίᾳ ἀπὸ τῆς διστεγίας πορνοβοσκοί τι κατοπτεύουσιν ἢ γρᾴδια ἢ γύναια καταβλέπει (*op. cit.*, iv, 129). Contrast the 'upper stage' of the Elizabethan theatre.

[5] See p. 32. κεραυνοσκοπεῖον . . . ἐστι περίακτος ὑψηλή (*op. cit.*, iv, 130).

[6] τὸ δὲ βροντεῖον, ὑπὸ τὴν σκηνὴν ὄπισθεν, ἄσκοι ψήφων ἔμπλεοι διωκόμενοι φέρονται κατὰ χαλκωμάτων (*op. cit.*, iv, 130).

[7] τῷ δὲ ἡμικυκλίῳ, τὸ μὲν σχῆμα, ὄνομα. ἡ δὲ θέσις, κατὰ τὴν ὀρχήστραν. ἡ δὲ χρεία, δηλοῦσα πόρρω τινὰ τῆς πόλεως τόπον, ἢ τοὺς ἐν θαλάττῃ νηχομένους (*op. cit.*, iv, 131–132).

[8] ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ στροφεῖον, ὃ τοὺς Ἥρως ἔχει, τοὺς εἰς τὸ θεῖον μεθεστηκότας, ἢ τοὺς ἐν πελάγει, ἢ πολέμῳ τελευτῶντας (*op. cit.*, iv, 132).

[9] αἱ δὲ Χαρώνιοι κλίμακες, κατὰ τὰς ἐκ τῶν ἑδωλίων καθόδους κείμεναι, τὰ εἴδωλα ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀναπέμπουσι. τὰ δὲ ἀναπιέσματα, τὸ μέν ἐστιν ἐν τῇ σκηνῇ ὡς ποταμὸν ἀνελθεῖν ἢ τοιοῦτον πρόσωπον, τὸ δὲ περὶ τοὺς ἀναβαθμούς, ἀφ' ὧν ἀνέβαινον Ἐρινύες (*op. cit.*, iv, 132). These 'Charon's steps' are preserved in the theatre at Eretria.

It will be readily understood what a service the elaborated scene-building and its accompanying contrivances did to the dramatists of the time. We have only to analyse the difficulties which must have faced any contemporary playwright to realize the fresh realms which were opened before him by successive improvements in the theatrical craft. Thus as a typical example one might take the prohibition imposed on the dramatist in regard to the presentation of murder on the stage. Originally due, apparently, to the religious associations of dramatic performances, this prohibition was almost absolute. In the earliest period the only method of informing the audience of some scene of violence was by introducing a messenger—a device rendered necessary by the physical conditions surrounding the dramatist, but essentially dull and uninspiring. With the appearance of the scene-building, however, a further means of overcoming the prohibition was presented. Behind the closed doors the cry of a Clytemnestra could be heard; or, still more effective, an actor could stand at the door and in broken words tell the audience of what he sees within. The last stage is reached when the ἐκκύκλημα is invented. Now the dramatist can present not merely the cries of the victim, but the dead body of the victim itself. All that he has to do is to arrange a tableau of murderer and murdered on the semicircular platform, wheel that round and display it to the wondering and terrified gaze of the spectators. It is obvious that this effect could not have been secured by the mere opening of the central doors. Only those directly in front could have seen the tableau; it would have remained out of the line of sight of those who sat toward the sides of the auditorium. Partly because of the ease with which the results of violent scenes might be shown, this convention, which forbade murder upon the stage, was passed on as a tradition to later times, being rephrased by Horace in classical Latin and imitated in Italian by critics and creative authors of the Renascence.

(ix) FESTIVAL ARRANGEMENTS AND THE CHORUS

There are many other things which have to be studied if we wish to understand the Greek drama and its theatre aright. Thus, for example, when we are reading a Greek play we want to know at what season of the year it was produced, at the City Dionysia in March or at the Lenaea in January. The reason for this is that, navigation being unsafe in the latter month, few strangers were present at the Lenaea. The performances were regarded as more homely and intimate than those which took place at the City Dionysia, when Athens was crowded with representatives of the allied states. It was at the City Dionysia that Aristophanes produced the *Babylonians*, in which he represented the allies as ground down by the tyranny of Cleon. The result was the impeachment of the author by the enraged demagogue, not because the former had dared to make fun of the government, but because he had done so *παρόντων τῶν ξένων*—in the presence of strangers. Such slips as this of Aristophanes were, however, not frequent, and we can generally trace a restraint and a marked care in the dramas, particularly the comedies, written to be performed at the more mixed festival.

So, too, the reader requires to know that plays in Greece were written in competition, a prize being awarded to that dramatist who succeeded in winning the favour of the judges selected by the people. The judges were not always uninfluenced by popular clamour, and as a result the playwrights often made direct efforts to capture the plaudits of the mass. Openly the comic poets bid for success, sometimes going so far as to present titbits to the crowd—a practice ridiculed by Aristophanes when, in the *Peace* (421 B.C.), he caused one grain of corn to be given to each member of the audience. More decorously, but not less eagerly, the tragic authors vied with one another, writing, sometimes with tongue in cheek, passages which were calculated to gain the applause of patriotic Athenians.

Many peculiar difficulties which an Athenian dramatist had to overcome depended upon the materials at his command in the shape of performers and chorus. Aeschylus, at the beginning of his career, had to struggle on with only two actors and a chorus. Even in the days of Euripides three actors appear to have been all that was allowed to the playwright. Not only so, but the tragic poet had to obey the rules of dignity laid down without actual enunciation by his audience. Traditionalism ruled dominant. Even when three actors were permitted no playwright succeeded in evolving that three-character dialogue which plays such a marked part in modern drama, and which was developed, because of the greater freedom and realistic licence of the *comus*, in Greek comedy. A certain conventional grandeur clung to the characters, even as their number was settled by convention. The manners depicted were mostly those of an heroic age, not of contemporary times. Women moved on a social equality with men such as was unknown in Athens of the fifth century B.C., but which had been described in immortal words by Homer centuries before.

The chorus by itself presented difficulties to the playwrights. The original dithyrambic chorus seems to have consisted of fifty performers, those for whom Aeschylus created the fifty daughters of Danaus in his *Suppliants*. By 487 B.C., however, the number was reduced to twelve, the reason being probably the convention of presenting at one time four plays—three tragedies and a satyric drama. A chorus of fifty persons for each would have been costly and difficult to rehearse; while fifty performers in all could easily be split into four separate divisions. Under Sophocles the number was raised to fifteen, possibly because of some exigencies of the dance evolutions. The presence of this chorus throughout the entire action of the drama offered to the author the problem of explaining to the audience the reason of their position on the stage. The earlier dramatists normally escaped from problems such as this by making the chorus the centre of the action, but Euripides displays in many of his tragedies his dissatisfaction with a traditional dramatic element which he must have come to regard as a mere encumbrance. In his plays the presence of the chorus is often deliberately slurred over; and in this way he stands as intermediary between Aeschylus and those later dramatists who virtually banished it completely. In the third century B.C. we discover that the comic chorus has been reduced to seven persons; in the second century B.C. it has shrunk to four and is evidently non-existent in tragedy. More than this, by the time of the New Comedy, and perhaps before, the chorus no longer stood in the orchestra throughout the whole of the action. It came on solely to present entertainments not necessarily associated with the plot of the play, in what may be styled the *entr'actes*. The process which led to this culmination is easily studied. In Aeschylus always and usually in Sophocles the words given to the chorus are intimately related to the action which has preceded on the stage and to the fate of the main tragic characters. In Euripides, on the contrary, the choral chant is often merely an independent lyric, of great beauty perhaps, but of no value for the development of the play. A stage further is marked in the works of Agathon, who, according to Aristotle, was the first to diversify his choral odes with ἐμβόλιμα (*embolima*, things thrown in), and in those of Aristophanes. The latest comedies by the latter present a peculiarity to our view. Sometimes, where we should have expected a formal ode from the chorus, there is marked in the manuscript merely the word *ΧΟΡΟΥ* (*chorou*, of the chorus). This is evidently a stage direction and implies: 'Let the chorus perform here, singing and dancing as it will.' These ἐμβόλιμα and this *ΧΟΡΟΥ* prepare the way for the undramatic choral entertainments which, we know, accompanied the New Comedy of later years. It is unquestionable that the choral element would have disappeared long before it did, had religious conservatism not dictated its retention. In later ages, of course, it reappeared, but only because of a kind of literary traditionalism.

(x) The Unities and the Acts

Perhaps in dealing with the chorus a word or two may be said concerning the famous unities and concerning the division of dramas into acts. It has been often pointed out by critics that the unities, as elaborated and expressed by Renascence critics, were almost wholly unknown in Greece. On the other hand, Greek drama does present the basis on which the later theories were based. The unity of time was referred to vaguely by Aristotle when he declared that tragedy, in contradistinction to the epic, was generally limited in duration, often being confined to twenty-four hours. It is obvious, first of all, that this general statement is strictly true, and, secondly, that it was more imperative to confine the duration of the action in Greek than in modern drama. The chorus, we must remember, stood continuously in the orchestra. Because of its presence the dramatic action had to be rushed forward to its conclusion. On the other hand, we must observe that the Greek dramatists evidently felt the restriction, for they have employed in the words of the chorus itself a certain species of idealized time. Indeed, we meet in Greek drama that peculiar phenomemon which, by critics of Shakespeare, is called a 'double clock,' where two separate impressions, or sets of facts, are presented before an audience. It is observable also that the tradition of the trilogy, by which three plays on the same general theme were produced together, provided the Greeks with a method of escape. Where the Orestes story would hardly be fully intelligible by itself, the conjunction of an *Orestes* with a preceding *Agamemnon* and a succeeding *Furies* supplied the spectators with what a modern dramatist would have to include in a single play. The unity of action, in the broadest significance of the term, has naturally to be preserved in all drama; but even in the narrower sense as implying an insistence upon one theme and upon one theme alone, it was never strictly adhered to in the realms of the Greek drama. Even in what seems at first sight to be the purest tragedy, comic elements were occasionally introduced. Old nurses and messengers were depicted with frequent touches of humour, so that the impression could not have been so simple and mono-emotional as Renascence critics declared it ought to be. Finally, there is the unity of place not mentioned at all in Aristotle's *Poetics*. At first glance it might seem as if this unity of place would have been indelibly impressed upon Greek drama because of the physical conditions of the playhouse; but even in this respect the stricter assumptions of the pseudo-classic critics are not justified. Both in Aeschylus' *Eumenides* and in Sophocles' *Ajax* the rules are broken, even if there is nothing of that violent and frequent alteration of locality which is such a marked feature of modern theatres. Undoubtedly there were limits beyond which the Greek dramatists could not go; undoubtedly, as compared with playhouses of to-day, their theatres imposed upon them restrictions which proved ultimately the basis for the theories of Renascence philosophers. At the same time we must note that the restrictions were not final and critically imposed; that there was always a margin of licence; and that the dramatists, not being critic-bound as were those of later days, succeeded in securing an even greater concentration of effect and sometimes an even more delicate subtlety in the seizing of situation, through the conventions within which they, as artists, had to work.

This question of the unities, itself dependent on the structure of the Greek playhouse, is intimately connected with the division of dramas into portions or acts. The Old Comedy of Aristophanes knew naught of formal dividing, and, although we can trace in general various portions fairly clearly marked, there is no norm which we can establish as the ideal to which the dramatists looked for their model. We may on the other hand state in bold terms that the comedies of Aristophanes do as a rule fall into seven separate parts or collections. There is, first of all, the πρόλογος (*prologos*, prologue), in which the general outline of the plot is presented, followed by the πάροδος (*parodos*, entrance), the entrance-song of the chorus. These two parts are preparatory for the ἀγών (*agon*), or dramatized debate between the principal characters of the comedy. The ἀγών over, the chorus comes forward to address the audience in the παράβασις (*parabasis*, from παραβαίνειν, *parabainein*, to come forward), a part which is itself apportionable into many subdivisions. This choral ode is followed by a number of ἐπεισόδια (*epeisodia*), or episodes, in which action enters more into play, the episodes for the most part illustrating the theme which in the ἀγών had been treated in an abstract and theoretical manner. When the histrionic action has ceased the chorus sings its στάσιμα (*stasima*) or χορικά (*chorika*), in which, addressing the audience once more, it draws conclusions from the ἐπεισόδια and sometimes from the ἀγών. Finally, leaving the theatre, the chorus sings its last song, the ἔξοδος (*exodos*, exit-song), often addressing the audience directly and pointing out salient features of the play. In tragedy a simpler division is apparent. Here, in spite of a certain amount of variation, we can trace a general tendency toward the presenting of five main portions of histrionic action (ἐπεισόδια) separated by four or more choral chants. It seems probable that, when the chorus disappeared as an integral part of the drama, these five portions, indicated even in Greek days as τὰ πέντε μέρη (the five parts), were standardized and that this example was that which Horace followed when he advised the would-be writer to make his tragedy of neither more nor less than five acts, while Horace's advice was, in its turn, taken over by the critics of the Renascence.

(xi) MASKS AND COSTUMES

The performance of a Greek play, whether comedy or tragedy, differed from a modern production not only in the facts that the theatre was an open-air structure and that a chorus played so large a part in the dialogue. The costumes, and above all the masks, gave to it a special character of its own. In any consideration of the costumes of the tragic actors it must be remembered that the manners portrayed in the tragedy as well as the themes of the plays reached back to the cycle of Homeric legend. For the Greeks, however, no thoughts of historical accuracy prescribed a dress which copied exactly that worn in previous centuries, and a solution seems to have been found in a conventionalized stage-costume which was similar to, yet differed widely from, the dresses of ordinary life. That this typical tragic costume was fully established, if it was not actually invented by him, in the time of Aeschylus is amply proved from references in later writings, and it endured down to Roman days, traditional conservatism having forbidden experimental alteration.[1] This actual dress may claim our attention first, as being the subject most easily disposed of. In simple terms we may say that the fundamental article of dress was the χιτών (*chiton*), a loose-flowing garment which extended from the neck to the ankles. The χιτών, of course, was worn in daily life as well, but the stage χιτών was distinguished from the ordinary χιτών by several peculiarities. (1) Because they were thought to be degenerate and effeminate, sleeves were eschewed by the Athenians. The stage-garment, however, was provided with such sleeves extending to the wrists. (2) Whereas the ordinary χιτών was usually belted at the waist, on the stage the girdle was worn just below the breast. This, as will be seen, was due to the exaggerated height of the tragic actor. (3) Instead of being always composed of white or of self-coloured materials, this χιτών was often adorned with many bright hues and was ornamented, now with formal designs, now with painted animals, figures, or symbolical forms (Fig. 19).[2] This richness of colouring must ever be borne in mind when we speak of the 'statuesque' quality of classical Athenian performances.

Above the χιτών was thrown a cloak, which might either be the ἱμάτιον (*himation*) or the χλαμύς (*chlamus*). The former was a long covering thrown over the right shoulder, the latter a short mantle cast over the left shoulder. These, like the *χιτών*, were gorgeously coloured, and, judging from the account of Pollux, we may hazard the conjecture that the colours were employed for symbolic effect. Thus it would seem that dark or dim colours signified grief or mourning (symbolism of emotion), and that queens wore garments in which purple played a predominant part (symbolism of station). In all probability the Greek dramatists were aided in their delineation of character and of soul-state by these means. It is undeniable, also, that while normally the principal figures in a Greek tragedy all wore this conventional costuming, special garments were occasionally employed to signify either the profession of the wearer or his immediate condition. Thus Pollux informs us that Telephus and Philoctetes, being in a state of abject misery, were clad in rags, and we may presume that the lower-class characters, such as servants or messengers, wore garments nearer to those in ordinary use. Small details of apparel too helped to make distinctions. Kings wore their crowns as they did in the Elizabethan theatre. A Persian sported his turban over the ordinary stage-dress. Hercules carried his club and lion's skin. Old men rested wearily on a stick or crutch. Granted that there was an understanding on the part of the audience, this conventional symbolism of attire must have gone far toward making the natures and the status of the various characters perfectly plain.

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[1] It will be understood here that the costume referred to is that of the actors and not of the chorus.

[2] καὶ ἐσθῆτες μὲν τραγικαί, ποικίλον. οὕτω γὰρ ἐκαλεῖτο ὁ χιτών (Pollux, *Onomastikon*, iv, 115).

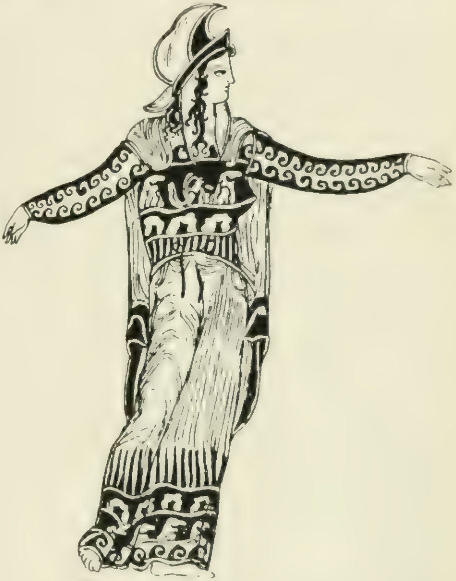


Fig. 19. Andromeda in Stage Dress

After Navarre, *op. cit.*, p. 2[illegible].

In connexion with the garments worn mention may be made of two peculiar features which the Athenian stage shared with the stage of China to-day. Probably because of the vastness of the Grecian playhouse the actor was usually raised to an abnormal height by the use of the *κόθορνος* (*kothornos*, cothurnus), variously known as the *ἐμβάτης* (*embates*) and the *ὀκρίβας* (*okribas*). These were boots with a heavy wooden sole, generally painted, no doubt with symbolic colouring. If the origin of the cothurnus, however, was due to the desire to make the actor seem taller than he was in reality, the prevalent wish for symbolism certainly entered in to give it a subordinate importance. Thus the height of the cothurnus varied in accordance with the importance of the character. A monarch was entitled to a loftier boot than was one of his attendant lords, and possibly the gradation passed down until, among the chorus, the heavily raised boot was non-existent. Along with this cothurnus must be taken the *ὄγκος* (*onkos*), a lofty headdress which towered over the mask, reminding us at times of the feathered head-gear of Restoration heroes and of the weirdly dressed performers in Chinese drama. This *onkos* and cothurnus, as is obvious, must have raised an actor of 6 feet to well over 7 feet 6 inches, and, to prevent his appearance from seeming unduly slim, padding was freely used to increase the bulk as well as the height. Perhaps this bulk corresponded also with the dignity of the characters. We know that kings wore a special short garment, heavily padded, to which was given the name of *κόλπωμα* (*kolpoma*).

The great characteristic of the Greek tragic actor was, however, not a portion of his dress, but the mask which rendered in conventional forms an indication of his age, station, and prevalent mood.

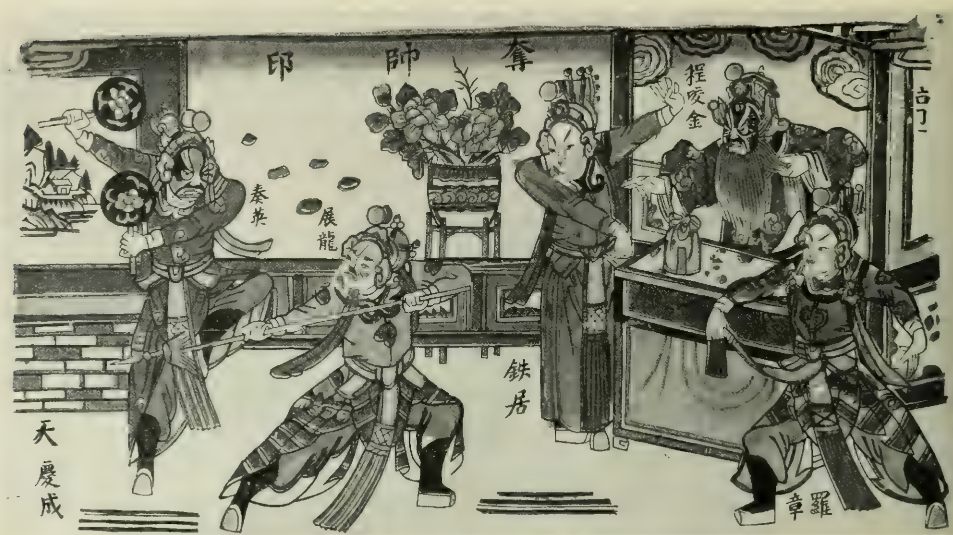


Fig. 20. COTHURNUS, MASKS, AND ONKOS ON THE MODERN CHINESE STAGE

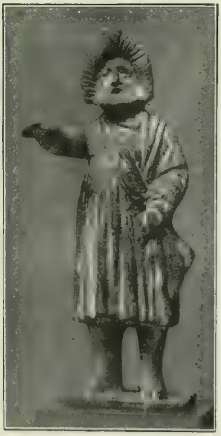


Fig. 21. TERRA-COTTA FIGURE OF AN ACTOR

From Bieber, *op. cit.*

While the mask owes its being without question to the religious ceremonies from which tragedy was born, it was, partly at least, dependent upon the theatre in which the performances were given. Facial expression would have been lost in the vastness of the Athenian playhouse; the mask gave typical expression in more easily visible form. The small number of actors allowed could not, without its help, have sustained their many parts. The aid given through the resonance of the widely opened mouth must have proved a welcome assistance even in theatres where, as we know, the acoustic properties were well-nigh perfect. For many reasons, then, traditionally religious as well as theatrical, the mask was retained as a prime feature of the actor's attire. Made of linen, cork, or wood, these masks provided much information to the audience. For our knowledge of the typical varieties the account given by Pollux, if meagre, is invaluable. In his work are enumerated nearly thirty masks for tragedy, and we gather that the mask-maker endeavoured, above all other things, to indicate the age of the person represented. Six old men are described in the *Onomastikon* as follows: (1) First comes the shaven type, the oldest of all, with a few white locks attached to the *onkos*. His mask depicts extreme age. This is the type of Priam. (2) Then there comes the man who is not quite so old—the "white" man, so he is styled by Pollux—with grey locks, a thick white beard, hanging eyebrows, and, above, a small *onkos*. Thus, no doubt, was Cadmus played. (3) Coming downward, we meet with the grey-haired man, of a dark or sallow complexion, the Oedipus of these type-characters, on the verge of old age. (4) Middle-aged men come next. The tyrant with thick black locks and beard, sharp face, and lofty *onkos* is nearest the age of Oedipus. Aegisthus must have been of this nature.

(5) Blonde hair seems to have indicated extremer youth, for there next comes the "fair" man, of a pleasant complexion and sporting a lower *onkos*, the "hero" proper, companioned (6) by the "fairer" man, rather paler and displaying a countenance which betokens distress or sickness.

This list of the older men in Pollux is followed by a list of eight young men, again distinguished by the colour of their hair, complexions, and *onkos*. (1) The eldest of these is the "good-for-all-work," a character who has no beard, but is granted thick black hair and locks. He is somewhat tanned in face, but has a good complexion, and is typified in the person of the youthful hero. (2) The character with crisp flaxen hair, fierce countenance and bushy eyebrows comes next, accompanied by (3) another, just a little younger. The description seems to be that of the youthful hero, corresponding in temperament with the last two types of middle-aged men, who obviously belong to the hero class. (4) Contrasted with these comes the "soft" type, pale of face, jocund of appearance, shining, as Pollux says, with a godlike beauty. A youthful divinity, such as Dionysos or Apollo, may well have appeared in such a mask. Perhaps Castor and Pollux belong to the same group.

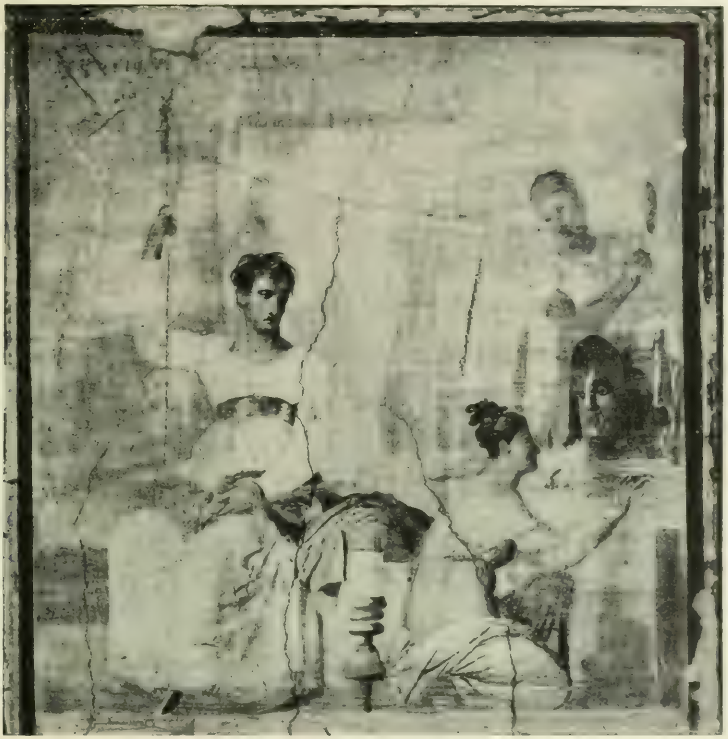


Fig. 22. A Tragedy King

The actor is shown with hair disarranged, as if he had but newly taken off the mask which is placed on the table to his left.

Photo Alinari.

(5) There come next the "squalid" characters with livid cheeks, light hair, and eyes downcast through misery. These are the youths whom misfortune has driven into despair. (6) Finally we reach the "pale" type and his companion (7) the quasi-pale type, the first very fair-haired, with lean, emaciated cheeks, the second more like the "good-for-all-work" but wasted by suffering. The former appears as Polydore's ghost in *Hecuba*, the latter as the fainting Orestes and as the lovelorn Hemon in *Antigone*.

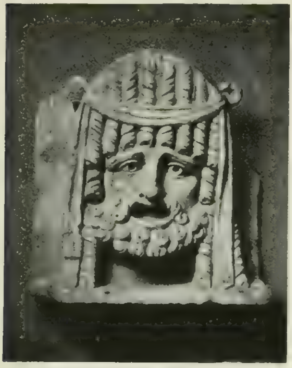


Fig. 23. Mask of a Tragic Hero
From Bieber, *op. cit.*

The servants of tragic drama appear next in Pollux' account, three varieties being noted. (1) The old man clad in leather, with a leather cap in place of an *onkos*, white locks, sallow face, sharp nose, and raised eyebrows, is the more intelligent servitor or the old tutor. (2) The servant with the peaked beard is middle-aged. He bears a high and wide *onkos* hollowed round the circumference. His hair is light in colour and his countenance ruddy. He is the typical messenger. (3) With him appears another snub-nosed messenger, fair also, with a ruddy complexion and hair parted at the middle of the head.

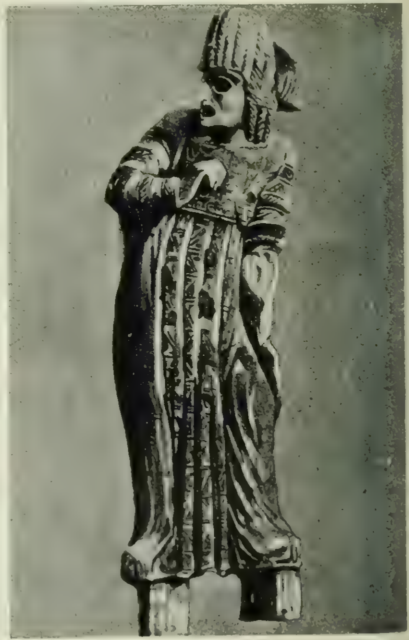


Fig. 24. Statuette of a Tragic Hero
Note will be taken of the *onkos*, the *cothurnus*, and the ornamented robes.

The three servants complete the list of male parts, so that we may now turn to the women characters. These, like the men, are arranged by Pollux in order of age. (1) There is first the grey-haired old woman, above the rest in years and position. She wears a medium-sized *onkos* and is pale of face. (2) The free old woman has grey hair, pale features, a smaller *onkos*, and locks streaming down to the neck. (3) Next comes the old woman slave with ruddy cheeks and a sheepskin bonnet instead of an *onkos*. This is a typical old nurse. (4) The middle-aged servant has a small *onkos*, is pale of face, and has hair streaked with grey. (5) The *diphtheritis*, or leather-clad woman, is younger than this type. She has no *onkos*. (6) "The woman with flowing hair" is dark, with pale, sad complexion, companioned by (7) another with long hair at the sides and short hair on the forehead. (8) The newly violated woman has a special tonsure. (9 and 10) The young girl with shorn locks has a pale complexion; of this type there seem to be two varieties. (11) Finally we find the very young child.

Both in tragedy and in comedy, of course, these type-masks were supplemented by the use of special masks which indicated either the mental or physical state of the wearer, or the legendary attributes of the fictitious person. The horned Actaeon, the blind Phineus or Thamyris, the many-eyed Argus, Achilles in despair over the death of Patroclus, Rivers, Hours, Muses, Furies—these are among the many similar characters which, as Pollux notes, were performed in this manner.

While comedy in many ways reproduced for another purpose forms found in tragedy, naturally the comic actor wore a dress fundamentally different from that of his tragic colleague. Padding (which was named σωμάτιον, *sōmation*), as in tragedy, was regular, but it was designed to create a ridiculous, not a dignified appearance. Puffed out in front and behind, and without the long χιτών, the comic actor bustled his way, Falstaff-like, on the stage. Over his padded stomach he sometimes wore an abnormally short χιτών, with occasionally an equally short χλαμύς. Sometimes, however, he was completely clad in a tight-fitting skin-like garment which clung closely to his limbs and was coloured to represent flesh or was striped with some dyes. Characteristic of his appearance was the phallus, which symbolized the prevailing licence and, to our minds, indecency of the Athenian comedy. Apparently these typical garments were carried over to the New Comedy, in which, however, a greater realism prevailed, some of the persons at least wearing the dress of ordinary life.

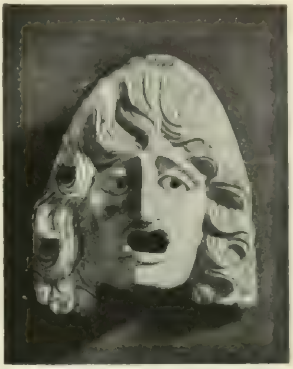


Fig. 25. Mask of the Long-haired Heroine
From Bieber, *op. cit.*

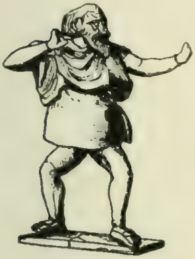


Fig. 26. Terra-cotta Statuette of a Comic Actor
From Haigh, *The Attic Theatre*, p. 258.

Like the tragic actors the performers in comedy wore masks, although without the *onkos* so typical of tragic grandeur. Pollux again provides us with a long list of these, differentiated once more according to age. (1 and 2) First come two characters called *pappos*. The first of these, an ancient grandfather, is almost bald but long-bearded. His face is pale and lean, his eyes dim; but his whole countenance betokens cheeriness. He is thus contrasted with his companion, who is still thinner, but is given a severe look with a ruddy, cantankerous appearance. Callipho and Simo in *Pseudolus* are later representatives of these types. (3 and 4) Alongside of these are the two 'old men' or stock comedy fathers, of whom Menedemus and Chremes in *Heautontimoroumenos* are typical. The former is called by Pollux the "chief." He has a hooked nose with a broad mask. The eyebrows have a certain peculiarity in that the right side is raised, the left horizontal, so that one profile indicates anger, the other calm, the actor being forced to turn his face one way or the other to reveal the fictitious emotions of the character he is representing. The second old man has a long, trembling beard, thick hair, and a certain phlegmatic appearance. (5 and 6) The Hermonios and Second Hermonios gain their names apparently from that of an actual actor-contemporary of Aristophanes. The chief of these two has a bald head, raised eyebrows, and a severe countenance. The second is barely described for us, but the short, pointed beard seems to have been a characteristic feature. (7) A pointed beard is worn also by another character, called by Pollux simply "the man with the pointed beard." He is marked by an air of intractability, which is indicated in his raised eyebrows. Lyco in the *Curculio* is of this type. (8) The brothel-keeper, the *leno* of the Roman stage, resembles the next-described character, Lycomedeios, save that he is bald and has

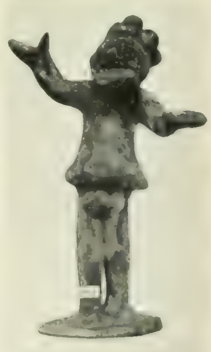


Fig. 27. Terra-cotta Statuette of a Comic Actor declaiming
From the original in the British Museum

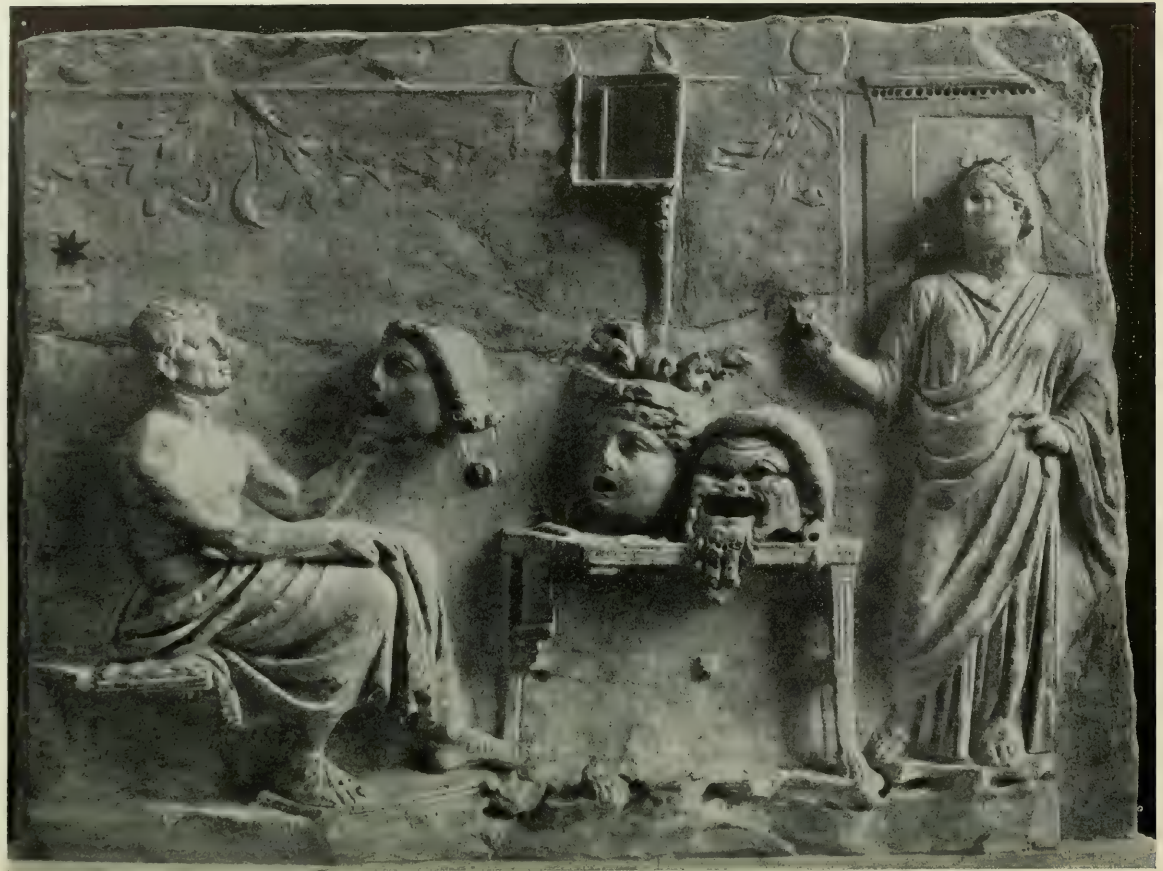


Fig. 28. Menander Relief, showing Masks of Youth, Courtesan, and Old Man

Photo Anderson.

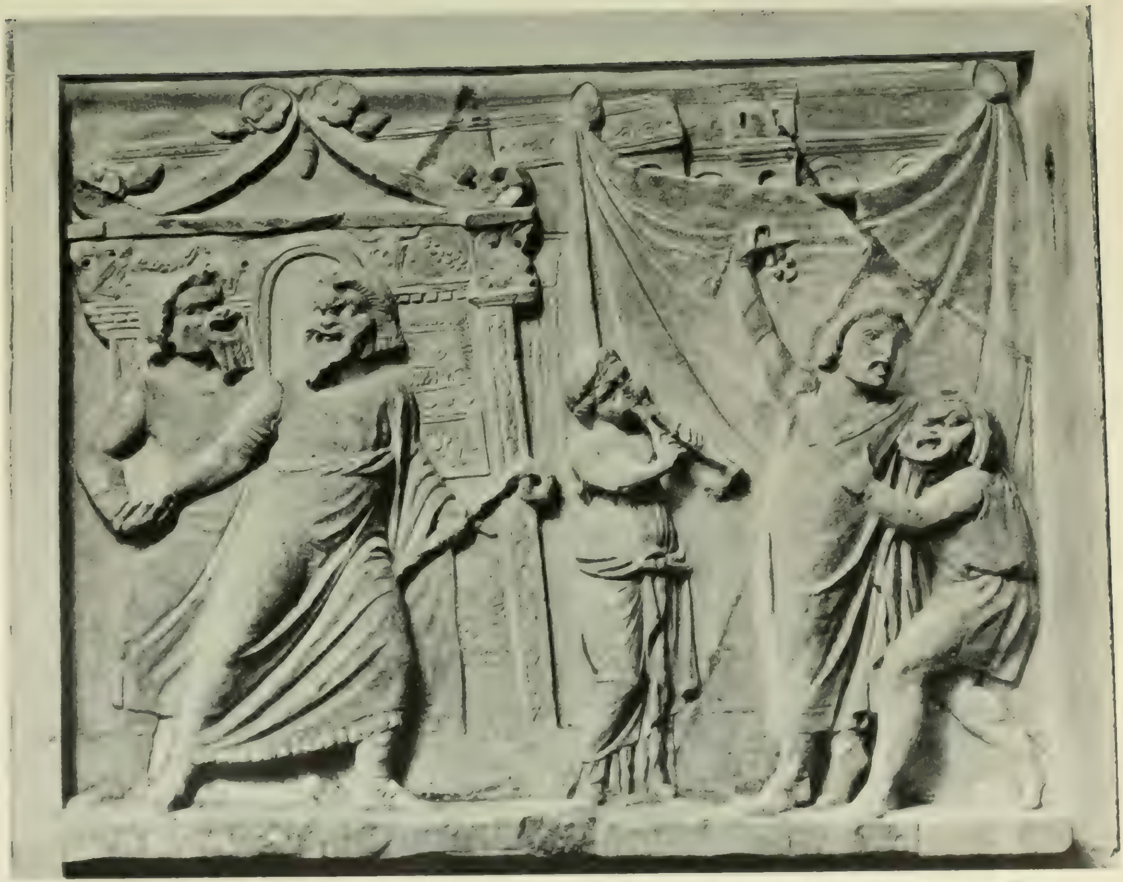


Fig. 29. Comedy Scene, showing Cheery and Testy Old Men, Flute-player, Youth, and Servant

Photo Anderson.

contracted brows and distended lips. (9) Lycomedeios sports crisp hair and a double expression, one eyebrow being raised, the other horizontal. He is the sycophant and busybody of the comic dramas.

The youths come next in order. Of these there are eleven, to correspond with the nine old and elderly men. (1) First comes the young man, " good-for-all-work." He is ruddy in colour, has raised eyebrows and a crown of hair on his head, with the general appearance of a robust, athletic youth—the lover, the ' juvenile lead ' of to-day, the Clitipho of the classical *Heautontimoroumenos*.

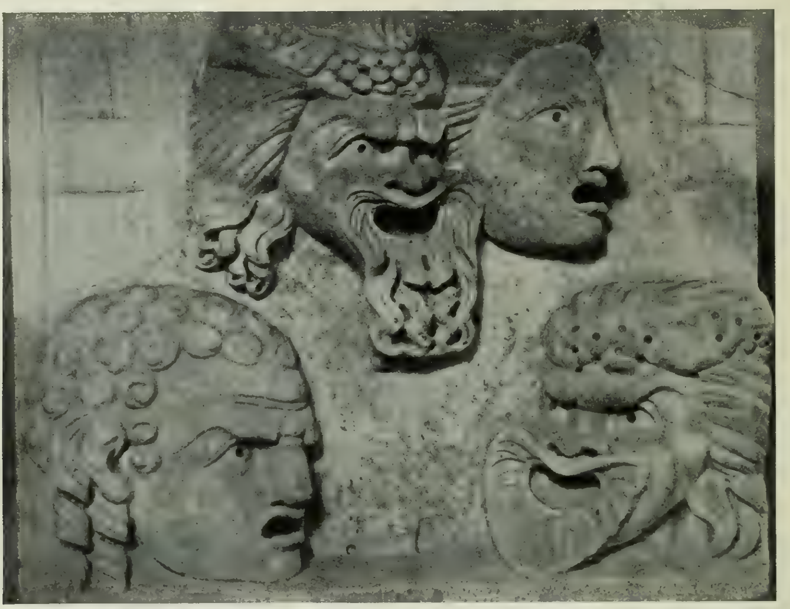
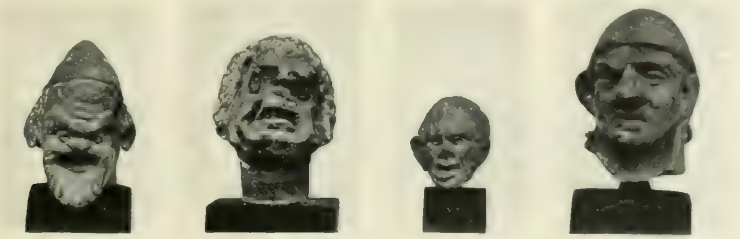


Fig. 30. Set of Masks: Old Man, Fair Youth, Youth with Curly Hair, and Servant

Photo Moscioni.

(2) The " dark young man " is a trifle his junior. His eyebrows are not raised, and he looks like a student or a follower of the gymnasium. He is obviously not so riotous as his elder brother. He is opposed to the (3) " young man with curled hair," who is more beautiful of feature and ruddy of complexion, with one wrinkle on his brow. His well-tended hair and general appearance betoken the man of luxurious life. (4) Still more effeminate is the " delicate young man " with a pale complexion, obviously reared in ease and unathletic habits. He too has a crown of hair on his head. He is the youngest of all and is typified in the Dinarchus of *Truculentus*. (5) In addition to these typical young men, lovers and their kin, appear seven other class types, of whom the " rustic " first claims our attention. His hair is black and bound in a crown on his head. His cheeks are tanned, his lips wide, and his nose flat. (6 and 7) Next comes the " boasting soldier," of which type there are two varieties, one having black hair and dark complexion, the other blond hair and fair complexion. Both are distinguished by the enormous headdress of threatening proportions.

Obviously Pyrgopolinices in the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus is the type representative of this class. (8 and 9) The flatterer and the parasite naturally go together, the former distinguished by evil eyebrows, the latter by a cheerier and more obsequious countenance. Both have dark hair, hooked noses, and broken ears. (10) With these goes the "Sicilian," a kind of third parasite, who is not described for us. (11) Finally there is a character called by Pollux merely a "portrait mask," that is, a stranger, well dressed, with a clean-shaven chin. He is probably the gull of the rascal crew described above.


Figs. 31-34. Terra-cotta Masks
From the originals in the British Museum.

The servants of comedy in some respects follow closely on the lines of the other characters. (1) Thus the first servant mentioned by Pollux is the *pappos*, a grey-haired old man who has been liberated for his long service, as is shown by the arrangement of his hair, which is as worn by freemen. (2) Next to him is the "chief slave," distinguished by a coil of red hair, raised eyebrows, and contracted brows. (3) There is a servant who is lean and ruddy, with raised eyebrows and a head partly bald. (4) The "crisp slave" has also red hair. His eyes are peculiarly screwed up and his lips distended. (5) With these goes Maison, the Greek cook, who is bald and has hair of a yellowish red. (6) Tettix, the foreign cook, boasts a bald head streaked with two or three black locks, a dark complexion, and a deceitful face. (7) Finally, there is a type of boasting servant with enormous headdress, a kind of double of type 2, represented in the Sceledrus of *Miles Gloriosus*.

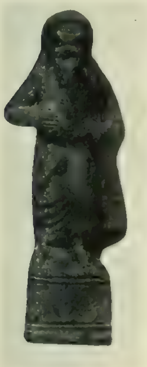


Fig. 35. Terra-cotta Statuette of an Old Man
From the original in the British Museum.

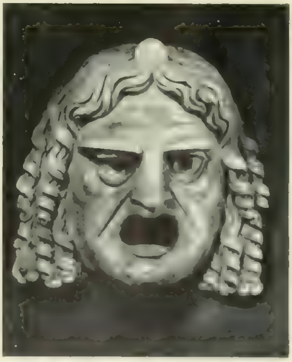


Fig. 36. Mask of a Tragic Hero
From the original in the Museo Nazionale, Rome.

The women's masks, some seventeen in all, now must occupy our attention. First there comes a group of three "old hags." (1) The lean or "wolfish" old woman, with thin net of wrinkles, white-haired and pallid, has crooked eyes, which correspond with the general rapacious nature of the type. (2) The "fat old woman" has deep wrinkles on her face, while her hair is caught in a band. (3) Thirdly, there is the old domestic servant, flat-nosed, with two molar teeth only in each jaw.

The "young women" correspond to the "young men," ranging in age from about forty-five

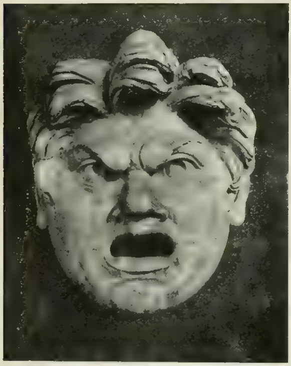


Fig. 37. Mask of a Messenger
From the original in the Museo Nazionale, Rome.

down to extremest youth. (1) First comes the "talkative woman," a perennial type. She has long hair, straight eyebrows, and a fair complexion. (2) The "crisp woman" is distinguished by the appearance of her hair, and it has been thought that this is the type of the silent, modest spouse. No doubt the two are represented in the Philumena and Pamphila of Plautus' *Stichus*. (3) The "virgin" is the young heroine, with straight dark eyebrows and a pale countenance. (4 and 5) Next come two "false virgins," girls of good family who have fallen into distress and have been the victims of violation. Whereas the virgin wears the usual maiden's headdress, the plaited locks separated by a parting, the first false virgin has her hair in a knot after the custom of young brides, and the second wears the maiden's locks without the parting. Both are pallid in complexion. With these we leave the world of upper-class life and pass to the *demi-mondaine*. (6) The "talkative mistress" is an elderly courtesan who has become a bawd. (7) The "mistress" has her hair done in the style of married women, which indicates the fact that she has been accepted by some wealthy man as his concubine. (8) The "accomplished courtesan" is somewhat like the false virgin, but is ruddier and has locks of hair about her ears. (9) The "young courtesan" is largely unadorned and only has a fillet binding her head. (10 and 11) The courtesan proper has, however, two companions, the "golden courtesan" and the "courtesan with the bandeau." The former, as her name shows, wears a profusion of golden ornaments in her hair; the latter binds her head with a gaily coloured bandeau. Both are older and more experienced than the young courtesan. (12) Among the courtesans we find, last of all, the *lampadion*, so called because of the fact that the hair is caught in a pointed tress on the head. Perhaps, as has been thought, this is the mask of the young noble-born girl who, seized away from her parents in youth, is thought to be a courtesan until discovery is made of her birth—the Marina of the classical stage. (18) The "dainty servant," clad in a white undergirdled tunic, is the lady's maid *par excellence*, while (14) the "servant with smooth hair," dressed in scarlet and snub-nosed, is clearly the confidante of the courtesan, typified in the Milphidippa of *Miles Gloriosus*.

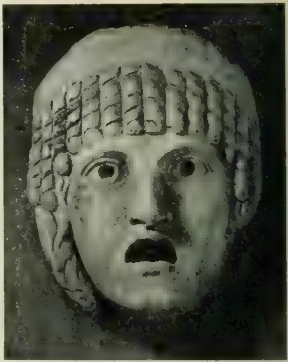


Fig. 38. Mask of a Tragic Heroine
From the original in the Museo Nazionale, Rome.

So ends the list of the masks in Pollux, and we can see from the indications given by him how age, class, birth, and nature were symbolized by special features. Colour of hair indicates the first; while snub-noses are apportioned to those of low birth. Colour and ornaments characterize the courtesans, and hair-dress the married and unmarried women. Eyebrows, lips, and complexion are freely used to indicate temperament and mental condition, the object of the whole being to allow the spectators at a glance to grasp the main features of the persons represented. All these indications, of course, serve to make the masks less real and individual.

It is thought by some that in the Old Comedy an attempt was made to provide some masks with lifelike features; that Cleon, Socrates, and others, appearing in the comedies of Aristophanes, were costumed and 'made up' to resemble their originals. This theory, however, has seen some discussion in recent years, and it would seem as if even then the types predominated to the exclusion of individual portraiture. Mr F. M. Cornford, analysing the main qualities of the characters presented in Aristophanic comedy, discovers there some half a dozen main forms: (1) the *miles gloriosus*, typified in Lamachus of the *Acharnians* and in Aeschylus of the *Frogs*; (2) the learned doctor, as in Socrates of the *Clouds* and Euripides of the *Frogs*; (3) the cook, as in Agoracritus in the *Knights*; (4) the parasite, shown as Cleon in the *Knights*; (5) the old man; (6) the young man; (7) the old woman; (8) the young woman with (9 and 10) a comic slave and another buffoon. To these types correspond not only the list of masks given by Pollux, but equivalent persons in the farce comedy of the Phlyakes type. In Pollux, as we have seen, we get various species of old men, including among them a pandar; we get young men, swaggering soldiers, flatterers, and parasites. Maison and Tettix (one fair and one dark) are slaves and correspond to the cook. Old women and young women (including the courtesans) are described, and from the extant records of New Comedy itself we can trace a learned doctor. In other words we have a set of stock characters corresponding with fair accuracy to the types discovered in Aristophanic comedy. So in the Phlyax mime-drama of Megara and Magna Graecia we find a corresponding set of stage figures. Two types of comic slave are present—a foolish and a sly one. There is a bald-headed type who reminds us of the parasite; a glutton; a doctor; a testy old man; a cook (*θεράπων*). In addition to these we know of a Myllus, an Acco, and a Macco, of whose characteristics we are ignorant. When we remember that in the Roman *fabulae Atellanae* one of the chief types is a foolish gull called Maccus, we are bound to connect him with the Phlyakes' *Μακκώ* (Macco). In any case, without anticipating by entering the field of Roman comedy, we find established a number of corresponding stock figures:

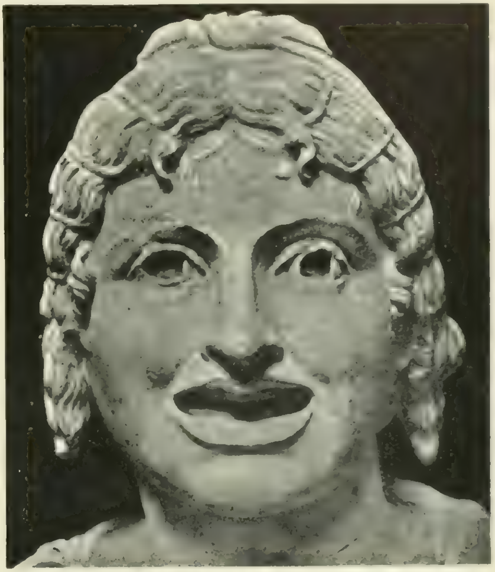


Fig. 39. MASK OF THE GOLDEN COURTESAN

From Robert, *Die Masken der neueren attischen Komoedie*.

OLD COMEDY	NEW COMEDY	PHLYAKES
Old Man	Old Man	Old Man
Young Man	Young Man	
Old Woman	Old Woman	Old Woman
Young Woman	Young Woman	
Soldier	Soldier	
Parasite	Parasite	Baldhead (parasite)
Cook	Cook (Maison and Tettix)	Cook
Doctor	Doctor	Doctor
Stupid Slave Clever Slave	Many slaves	Macco and other Comic Slaves

The correspondence is remarkable, and perhaps enough has been said to show the inherent traditionalism of comedy and the importance of these stock types when considered in relation to later Roman and Renascence drama.

CHAPTER II

THE ROMAN THEATRE

(i) The Playhouses

BY the time that Rome first thought of theatres the old religious feeling which had dominated early Greek drama was dead. Even although the initial dramatic performance in Rome itself was held to placate the angry gods, the fact remains that the theatre for the Romans was nothing but a theatre; its association with the temple had vanished. For some considerable time the Senate opposed the erection of anything but wooden structures for dramatic shows or entertainments. A stone playhouse built in the year 154 B.C. was forthwith destroyed by them. The first permanent stone theatre, accordingly, was not constructed till 55–52 B.C., under the direction of Pompey. This was the Roman theatre *par excellence*, and came to be a model on which architects of those and of later times worked.

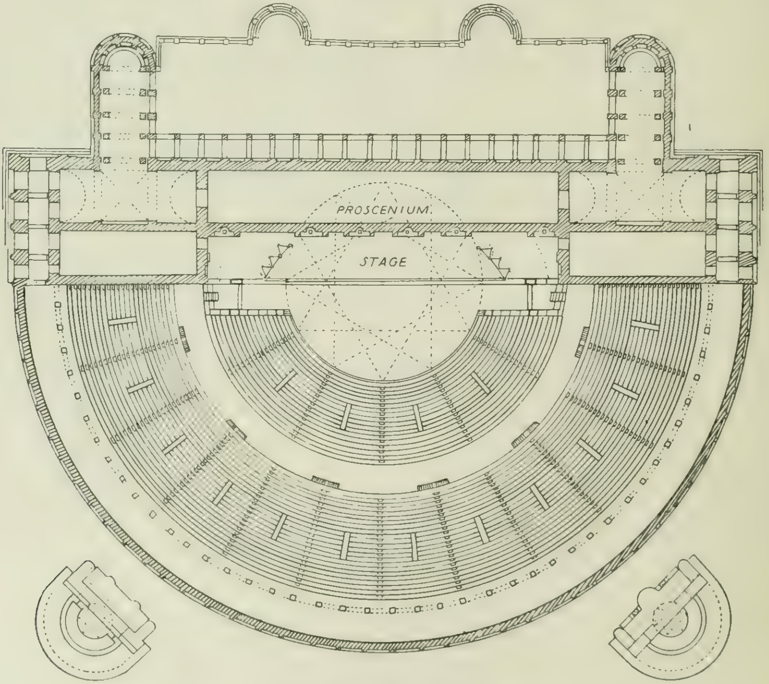


Fig. 40. Plan of the Marcellus Theatre at Rome

From Streit, *Das Theater*, Plate VIII.

THE ROMAN THEATRE

The Roman theatre, many examples of which have been preserved in various cities of the old Empire, differed from the Greek, whether classical, Hellenistic, or Graeco-Roman, in many respects.

(1) The first peculiarity we note is that seldom were those theatres set on the slopes of hills. Almost always they were built on level ground, whereas under Greek influence, with one or two exceptions, the auditoria rested on a natural proclivity. It is difficult at first to divine the reason of this, but it is probable that the desire of architects to have the wall-space for elaborate embellishment may have been one determining factor. As we shall find, one of the peculiarities of the Roman theatre is the attention paid to the beauty of the outer structure. Save in one or two instances the Greeks left the rear of their scene-buildings severely unelaborate.

(2) More important are the changes made in the arrangement of the auditorium, or *cavea*, and of the stage itself. The most characteristic of these is the new form given both to the orchestra and to the rows of seats. A Roman theatre is fundamentally differentiated from a Greek by the fact that the *cavea* is exactly a semicircle (Fig. 40), the benches occupying the side portions being cut away, probably because they gave only a partial view of the stage. At the same time the orchestra was cut sharply in half, also exhibiting a semicircle bounded on the diameter by the front of the stage itself (Fig. 40), generally styled the hyposcenium (*ὑποσκήνιον*, or under-stage). Sometimes, perhaps, the orchestra was used for extra seating accommodation; sometimes, as in the Nero reconstruction of the theatre at Athens, arrangements were made whereby the whole of the orchestral space could be flooded for the presentation of mimic sea-fights or the like. In Athens a marble balustrade was erected probably for this purpose and also to form a protection for those occupying the lowest seats during gladiatorial displays.

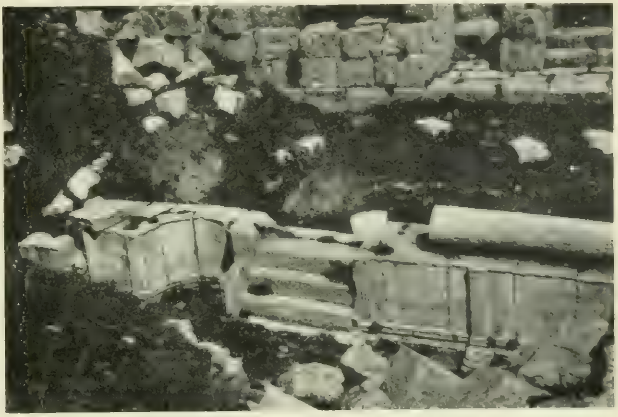


Fig. 41. Stage Front at Djemila

Note will be taken of the steps leading from stage to orchestra.

From Gsell, *Monuments de l'Algérie*, vol. 1, Plate XLV.

(3) Possibly because the orchestra may have been occasionally used by spectators, the stage in the Roman theatre was comparatively low, rarely reaching above 5 feet in height, but, owing to the encroachment on the orchestra, it was considerably deeper than even the stage in Graeco-Roman structures. Doors were usually provided in the front or hyposcenium wall, while steps from the stage-level to the ground appear to have been usual. Permanent stone steps for this purpose are still to be seen in the theatre of Djemila in North Africa (Fig. 41).

(4) The *frons scaenae*, or what was originally the *episkenion*, was, as in Graeco-Roman theatres, gorgeously decorated. The best-preserved example is perhaps that of the theatre at Orange in France (Figs. 45–47), where an imposing architectural façade, broken by three doors, forms the background for the actors. It will be noted that in this theatre, as in the Graeco-Roman theatre at Aspendos (Figs. 42–44), a roof covers the stage itself.[1] Although definite information is lacking

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[1] The roof is now no longer in existence, but is shown in the reconstruction in Fig. 44.

it is probable that this was a usual feature of the Roman playhouse. Sometimes, as in the Phaedrus alterations in the theatre at Athens (third or fourth century A.D.) the desire for decoration was carried to the hyposcenium; an elaborate frieze introducing kneeling figures was erected there to take the place of what was before a comparatively blank wall (Fig. 48). In other theatres the hyposcenium front was indented with niches and rounded recesses (Fig. 49).

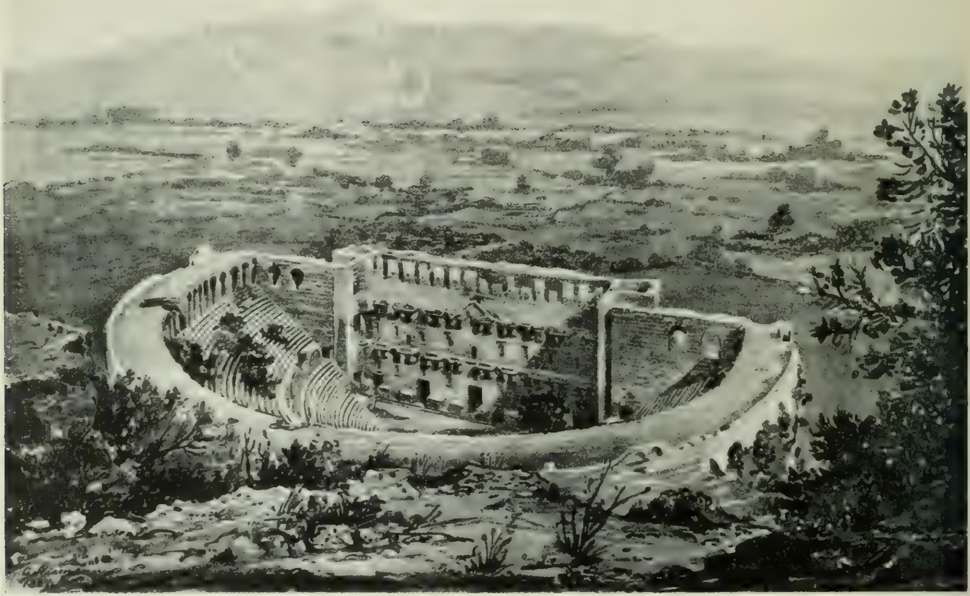

Fig. 42. THE THEATRE AT ASPENDOS
From Lanckoroński, *Städte Pamphyliens und Pisidiens*, Plate XX.

(5) Important too are the changes made in connexion with the *parodoi*, or entranceways. At Epidauros and elsewhere in Greece these *parodoi* were often enclosed in monumental open gateways; but, even when the gateway extended from the edge of the scene-building to the banks of seats the theatres remained divided into two parts—auditorium and stage. In the Roman theatres the open entrances disappeared, their place being taken by *vomitoria*, or covered passages, which bound the stage and the *cavea* architecturally into one. This, as is obvious, had immense consequences, for architects now were occupied with a new problem—the creation of a playhouse

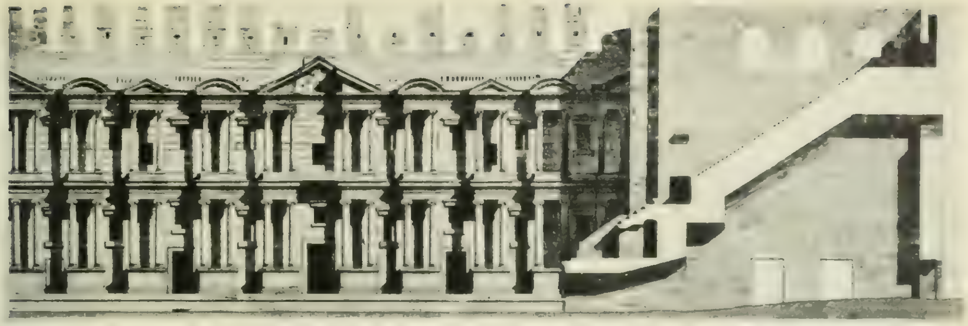

Fig. 43: RECONSTRUCTION OF THE FRONS SCAENAE AT ASPENDOS
From Lanckoroński, *op. cit.*, Plate XXIV.

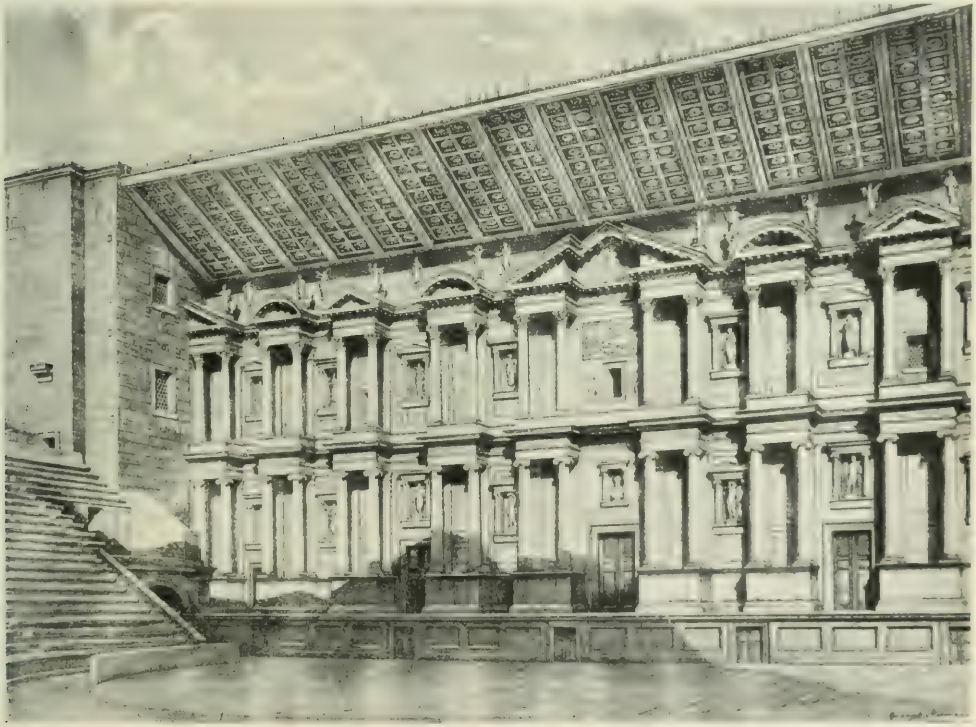

Fig. 44. RECONSTRUCTION OF THE FRONS SCAENAE AT ASPENDOS
From Lanckoroński, *op. cit.*, Plate XXVII.

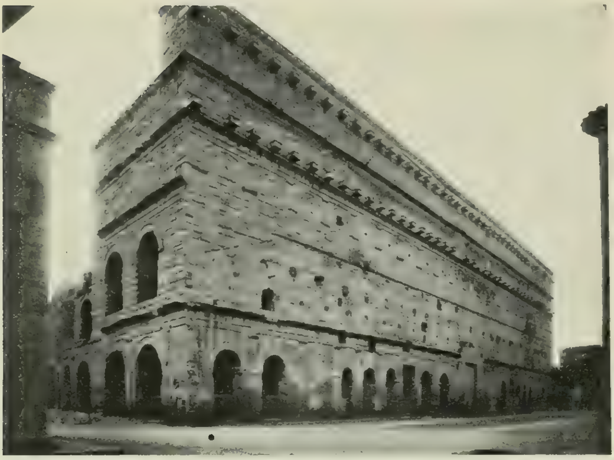

Fig. 45. The Outside Wall of the Theatre at Orange
N. D. Photo.

which should have unity of design, where various parts were not to be considered separately, but where stage and auditorium were organic portions of a greater whole.

(6) In general we may say that the Roman theatre presented an appearance more ornate than, and at the same time not so beautiful in its simplicity as, the Greek. The richly decorated *frons scaenae*, the long low stage, or *pulpitum*, the friezes, and the decorations removed it far from the bare grandeur of the first Athenian playhouse. This impression must have been increased by various other subsidiary appurtenances. Awnings spread

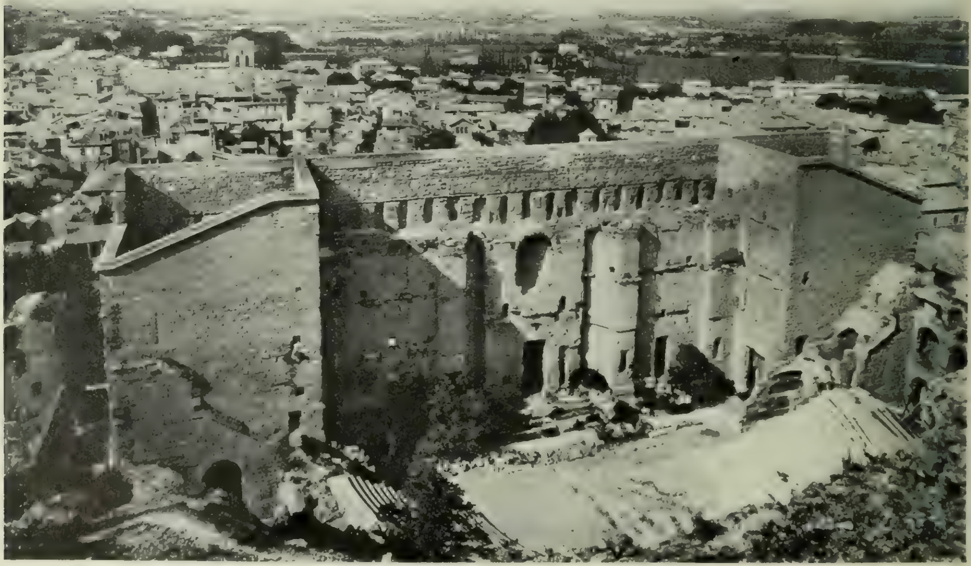

Fig. 46. The Theatre at Orange
N. D. Photo.

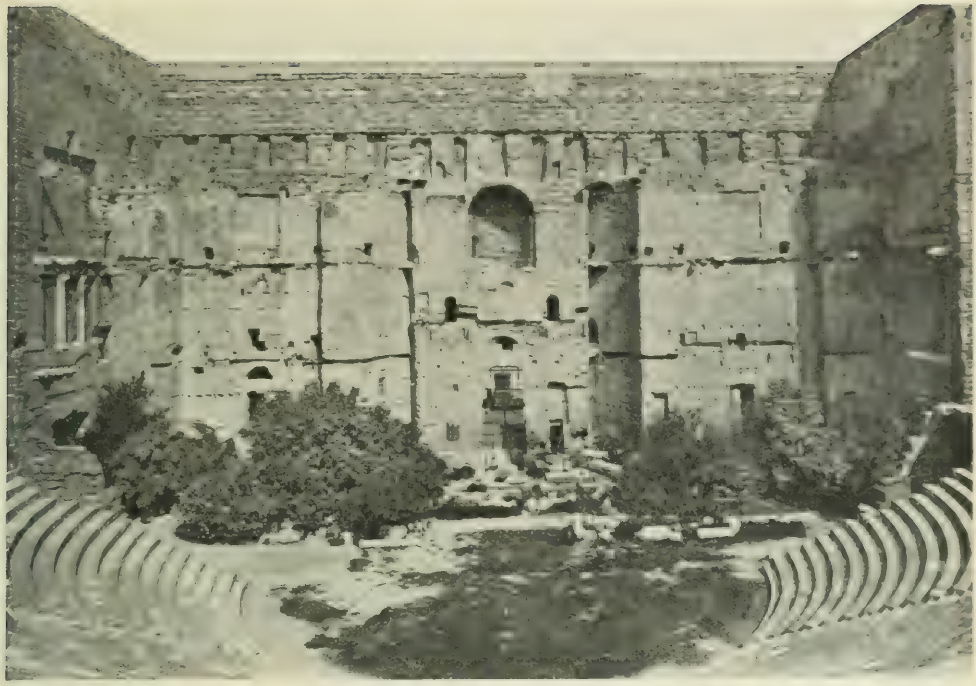

Fig. 47. The Theatre at Orange
N. D. Photo.

over part or over the entirety of the *carea* seem to have been not uncommon, while to cool the fetid air slaves passed up and down the passageways spraying the audience with rose-scented waters. New efforts were made to secure theatrical effect. Besides the machines utilized by the Greeks, we find the introduction of an *auleum*, or curtain, which, unlike modern curtains, dropped down into a hollow recess placed toward the front of the stage. How far this *auleum* was

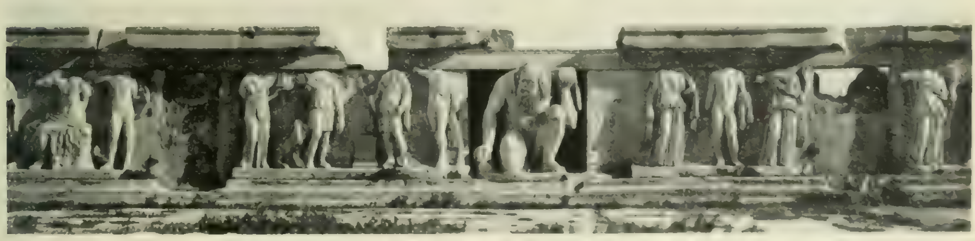

Fig. 48. Reliefs on the Hyposcenium of the Theatre at Athens
Photo Sebah.

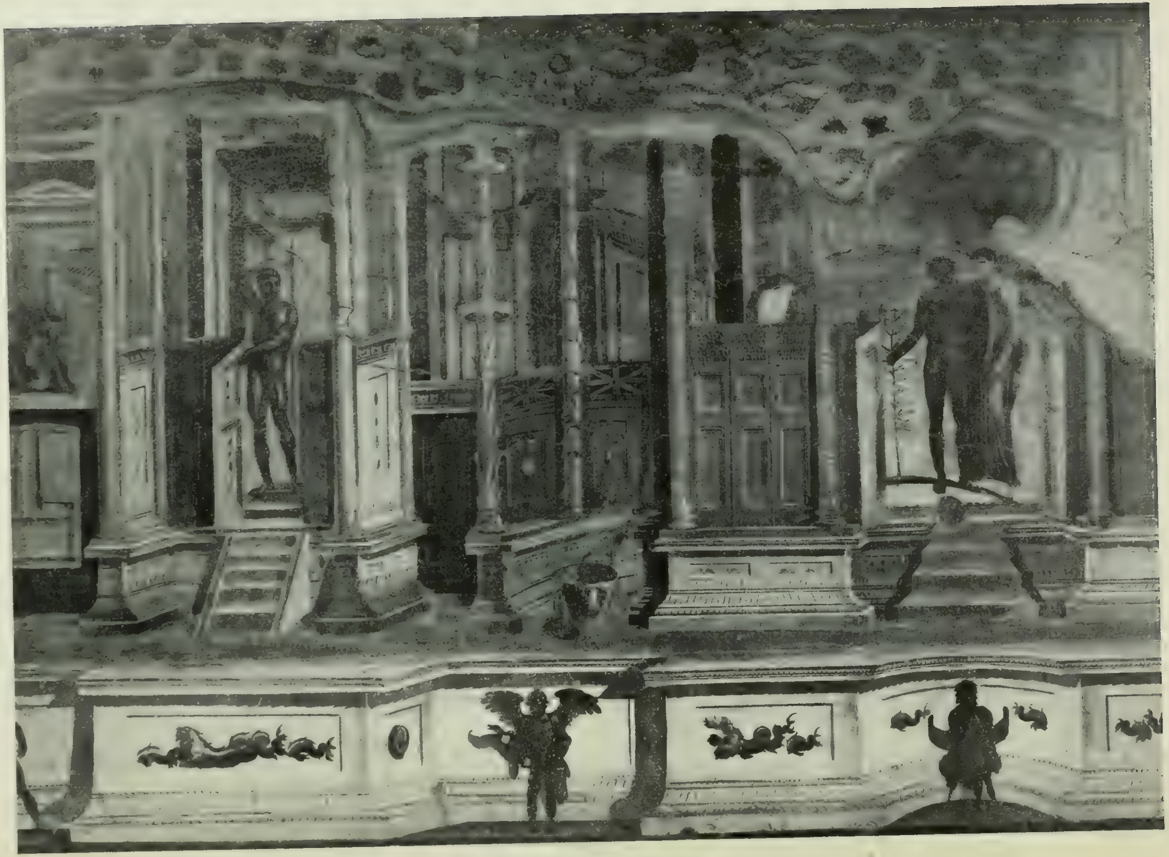

Fig. 49. A Roman Stage

Pompeiian wall-painting.

Photo Alinari.

used we have little means of judging, but it brings the antique theatre yet one step farther forward toward the modern type.

(ii) Actors, Costume, and Masks

One fundamental cause of the decline of Roman drama lies in the social position occupied by the actors. While originally it would seem the comic or tragic poet engaged his own company and perhaps took a leading part in it himself, the custom soon arose of having permanent dramatic troupes. These troupes were gathered together by a manager, and consisted of slaves whom he could flog or put to death if he chose. Naturally the profession of acting was as a consequence despised, and, even after Roscius had won for himself fame and esteem, there never was in Rome that dignity surrounding a performer which is evident in records of the Greek theatre. Still more did the acting profession decline on the introduction of the *mimi*[1] when women first appeared on the stage, prostituting themselves to the degenerate tastes of a vulgar audience.

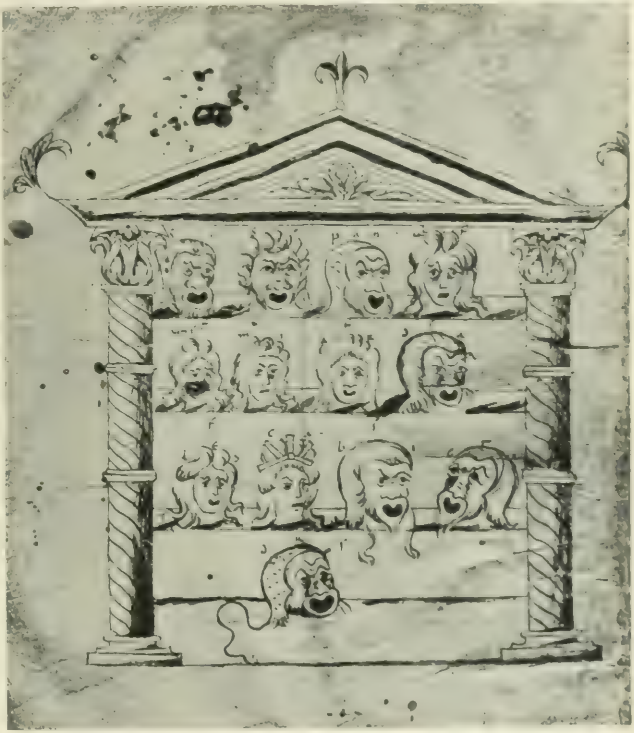

Fig. 50. Masks for the "Andria" of Terence

From a Vatican MS. as reproduced in Robert, *Die Masken der neueren attischen Komödie*, p. 89.

The costumes used by the Roman actors were, almost invariably, modelled on the Greek. For tragedy there were the long sweeping robes (*syrmata*) which corresponded to the χιτών, and for comedy various short garments which at once recall the costumes both of the Phlyakes and of the regular literary comedy. Wigs (*galeri* or *galearia*) were usually worn, and the tragic actor sported buskins, or *cothurni*, as in Greek times. Still symbolism in colour seems to have been employed. Old men were usually dressed in white, young men in purple, parasites in grey, courtesans in yellow. Originally, it would seem, masks were not used, but became later, as in Greece, familiar accompaniments of the comic actor. These masks were sometimes more or less natural, sometimes highly exaggerated. In this connexion there is an interesting miniature preserved in a manuscript of the *Andria* of Terence, showing the masks for that piece arranged in rows (Fig. 50). The various masks here are lettered by the copyist of the manuscript, but it would seem that some mistakes have been made in the apportionment of the characters. As Robert has shown,[1] while the first two masks in the top row are rightly marked as Simo, the ἡγεμὼν πρεσβύτης, and Sosia, the δοῦλος πάππος, the third cannot be Panphilus, as marked, but must represent Davos, the slave. The last mask in the first row seems to be that of Archylis, the friend of the heroine. The second row contains Mysis, a maid, Panphilus, the lover, Charinus, a youth, and Byrria, a slave. In the third row we have Lesbia, the wife, Glicerium, the heroine, Chremes, an old man, and Crito, the second πάππος, while in the fourth row comes Dromo, a slave. It would appear that, as in Greece, the colour of the hair aided in differentiating the types. White hair was a symbol of age, black of youth, while red distinguished the slaves.

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[1] See *infra*, pp. 60–62.

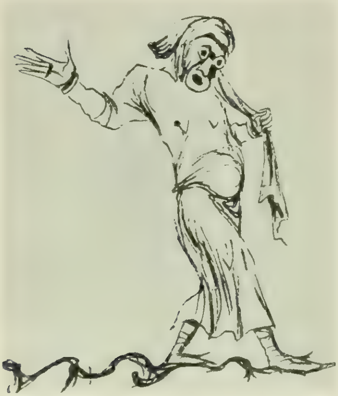

Fig. 51. SYRUS IN THE "HEAUTONTIMOROUMENOS" OF TERENCE

From a Vatican MS. reproduced in Robert, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

(iii) TYPES OF ROMAN DRAMA

For the most part the Roman drama was imitative—imitative of the Greek. Tragedy, under Ennius and Seneca, has no interest for us here; but something may be said of forms of comic drama. The most famous of all types of Roman comedy is, of course, the *fabula palliata*,[2] patronized by Terence (P. Terentius Afer, *c.* 195–159 B.C.) and T. Maccius Plautus (*c.* 254–184 B.C.), who based their work on the New Comedy of Greece, particularly on the plays of Menander and those associated with him—Philemon, Diphilus, and Demophilus. Their works were thus usually mere adaptations, and the manners described were those of Greece rather than those of Italy. In these plays we get once more the stock characters which have already been noticed in Aristophanes, the popular comedy of Greece, and the New Comedy.[3] There are the old men, sympathetic and kindly, as is Philto in the *Trinummus*, or luxurious and libertine like Lysimachus in the *Casina*. There are boasting soldiers such as appear in the *Miles Gloriosus* and other comedies; rascally servants like Tranio in the *Mostellaria*, Pseudolus and Epidicus; young lovers, young heroines, old pedants, and old women—a series of types, indeed, which shows that we are working on the old lines laid down in Greece.

The *fabula palliata* ended with Terence, giving way to the *fabula togata*, in which Italian rather than Greek manners were presented, and where stress was laid rather on the feminine element. Perhaps because of social considerations, the slaves seem to have been rarely so cunning as the astute rascals of the Plautan and Terentian types. Italian manners too, but rather those of city than of country-folk, appear in the *fabula tabernaria*, of which little definite is known, but both of these faded before the introduction to the literary theatre of the *fabula Atellana*, brought to popularity under Pomponius of Bononia and Novius in the time of Sulla. This *fabula Atellana*, although at first sight it seems to be the only form of native drama which the Roman Empire possessed, must have come originally from Greece. Flourishing in Campania, it gained its title from the small town of Atella, the modern Aversa. While little is known of this comedy save the titles of some of the plays, we have record of some four chief character-types who seem to have been displayed over and over again. Maccus is the first of these, evidently derived from the Greek *Μακκω*, a foolish person with hooked nose and rounded shoulders. Next comes Bucco, with bulged out cheeks, Pappus the bald-headed old man, and Dossennus the hunchback. Perhaps to these may be added a fifth, Cicirrus, or the 'cock.' If, once more, we consider the types of these Atellan plays together with the types of the *fabula palliata* we get a striking correspondence.

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[1] *Die Masken der neueren attischen Komödie* (1911), pp. 88–91.

[2] From *pallium*, the equivalent of the Greek χλαμύς.

[3] See *supra*, p. 49.

Fabula Palliata	Fabula Atellana
Testy old men	Pappus (Old man)
Miles Gloriosus	Cicirrus (Soldier)
Two Comic Slaves	Maccus Bucco (Buffoons)
Pedants	Dossennus (Learned man)

The importance of this correspondence will become increasingly apparent as we study the drama of Renascence Italy. At present it may be noted that both the popular and the literary stage of Greece and of Rome knew these figures; and, moreover, that the titles preserved of plays of the *fabula Atellana* type bear strange resemblance not only one to another, but also to titles of many centuries later. *Maccus Virgo* (*Maccus a Girl*), *Maccus Miles* (*Maccus a Soldier*), *Bucco Adoptatus* (*Bucco Adopted*), are typical titles of the Atellan farce, and they recall in their forms the *Arlequin Homme à Bonne Fortune*, *Arlequin Misanthrope*, *Arlequin Empereur dans le Monde de la Lune*, of the seventeenth century.[1]

On its introduction to Rome from its Oscan home the *fabula Atellana* declined, and itself gave way to the *mimus*, a type of entertainment intimately connected with the Grecian Phlyakes. In this *mimus*, or *fabula riciniata*,[2] we meet definitely for the first time that theme, so common later, of the doltish cuckold, the frail wife, and the intriguing gallant. No doubt there were many points of correspondence between the Atellan and mime farce; in both no doubt adultery was a stock jest, and indecent phrases were used to evoke laughter among the spectators. Still more vulgar, in all probability, was the *pantomimus*, where licentious terpsichorean entertainments ruled the stage. The Roman drama, as such, comes to an end with these forms of farce and ballet; yet we must remember that even the crudest farce had still something in it of artistic flavour and of social purpose. Grave Roman senators attended the mime performances, and saw in their satirical proportions a salutary object. The mime triumphed for qualities both good and evil, and those good and evil qualities served to keep it alive when, on the fall of the Roman Empire, darkness descended upon the theatres.

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[1] See *infra*, p. 114.

[2] From *ricinium*, a sort of mantilla.

CHAPTER III

THE THEATRE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

(i) The Relics of Roman Mime

WITH the gradual decay of the Roman Empire the mime, preserved and even encouraged for reasons of polity, came to occupy a position ever more and more debased. Emperors might tax their treasury severely in order to provide entertainments for the populace, but many things combined together to destroy even the mime as a form of theatrical art. The populace may have clamoured over their favourite troupes; three thousand dancing-girls, as Ammianus Marcellinus informs us, may have been allowed to stay in Rome when that city was starving and learned men were driven from its gates; but criticism had already begun to direct its attention to the enormities of the stage. Christian influence soon made itself felt and decrees were issued forbidding baptism to anyone who had been a *scaenicus* or a *scaenica* (actor or actress). Still, however, the shows made their appeal. Both at Byzantium (Constantinople), the seat of the Eastern Empire, and at Rome they endured in spite of all the violent attacks of the early Fathers of the Church. As late as 692 there are records of performances of various kinds in the East, while *scaenici* still played their part when the Ostrogoths wielded power in Italy during the sixth century. At Rome, however, after the coming of the Lombards in 568 we hear no more of *spectacula* or of theatres; while, in the East, Saracen invasions must have set people thinking of things more stern than merry supper-parties with groups of dancing-girls.

It is undeniable, then, that during the sixth century in Italy and during the seventh century at Constantinople theatrical shows as a whole completely disappear; but we cannot, because of this fact, assume that all knowledge of that mime and dialogue which constitutes drama also disappeared. A complete account of the evidence which exists for the presence of *mimi* in the Middle Ages would here take up too much space. All that may be given is the barest summary of some main points.

(1) Theatres by some contemporary writers are treated as separate from mimic shows, and there is an implication that while the playhouses had fallen into disuse the *mimi* continued their entertainments. Thus in the seventh century Isidore of Seville has the following words concerning the former:

> Scaena autem erat locus infra theatrum in modum domus instructa cum pulpito, quod pulpitum orchestra vocabatur, ubi cantabant comici, tragici, atque saltabant histriones.[1]

All this is narrated in the past tense; but the present tense is used when the writer turns to the *mimus*:

> Histriones sunt qui muliebri indumento gestus impudicarum feminarum exprimebant. Mimi sunt dicti Graeca appellatione, quod rerum humanarum sint imitatores.[2]

Throughout the entirety of the Middle Ages these *histriones* are referred to. *Melius est Deo placere quam histrionibus*—" It is better to please God than the actors "—Alcuin warns a young friend. *Melius est, pauperes edere de mensa tua, quam istriones*—" It is better to feed paupers at your table than actors "—declares the same author to the Bishop of Lindisfarne.

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[1] " The scene *was* the place at the bottom of the auditorium built like a house with a stage. This stage *was called* the orchestra. There comic and tragic actors *sang* and histriones *played* their acrobatic tricks."

[2] " ' Histriones ' *are* those who, dressing as women, presented the doings of common women. . . . ' Mimi ' they *are* called in Greek, because they are imitators of human life."

(2) The Middle Ages had as their entertainers men known as *jongleurs*,[1] and later as *ministri*. The latter word is derived from the classical Latin *minister*, ' inferior ' and hence ' attendant.' ' Minstrel ' is the modern English derivative. But the word *jongleur*, which comes from the classical Latin *iocularis*, ' merry,' is regarded by many as the exact equivalent of *istrio* (actor) or *mimus*. Thus an early glossary declares that *istriones sunt ioculatores* (" actors are *jongleurs* "), while *mimi seu ioculatores* (" *mimi* or *jongleurs* ") is a common phrase. That is to say, whether the *jongleurs* were merely acrobats and balladmongers or not, medieval writers regarded them as being the direct descendants of the more ancient *mimi*. Their tradition seems proved.

(3) According to Thomas de Chabham, Sub-Dean of Salisbury (*d.* 1313), these entertainers, as we may call them, were of three kinds :

> Tria sunt histrionum genera. Quidam transformant et transfigurant corpora sua per turpes saltus et per turpes gestus, vel denudando se turpiter, vel induendo horribiles larvas. . . . Sunt etiam alii qui nihil operantur, sed criminose agunt, non habentes certum domicilium, sed sequuntur curias magnatum et dicunt opprobria et ignominias de absentibus ut placeant aliis . . . Est etiam tertium genus histrionum qui habent instrumenta musica ad delectandum homines, et talium sunt duo genera. Quidam enim frequentant publicas potationes et lascivas congregationes, et cantant ibi diversas cantilenas ut moveant homines ad lasciviam . . . Sunt autem alii, qui dicuntur ioculatores, qui cantant gesta principum et vitam sanctorum.[2]

There are thus (*a*) *mimi* proper, (*b*) satirists, who may be the wandering scholars or *Goliardi*, (*c*) instrumentalists and singers of a lower type, (*d*) instrumentalists of a higher type. Is it possible that any of these preserved something of the ancient mime tradition? If any did it could not have been the *jongleurs* of classes (*c*) or (*d*), but what of those satirists and of those who indulged in indecent dance and gesture, wearing horrible masks? May these not have preserved something of the mime tradition?

(4) It is obvious that, if they did, little in the shape of literary farce would have come down to us, for the mime itself and much of the *fabula Atellana* was unliterary. Nor would pious chroniclers say much of what they heartily despised and condemned ; according to Thomas de Chabham, all but the last class of *histriones* were destined to complete perdition. We may expect then but few records, and must take such records as symbolic rather than as comprehensive. It is impossible here to discuss all these records, few as they are, but two seem of special value. Thomas Aquinas, writing in the *Summa Theologiae* (before 1274), has something to say of the *ludus*, which may mean either ' play ' or ' entertainment '—we can hardly tell which. The writer, however, in discussing the kind of *ludus* which is permissible and even " necessary for the conversation of human life," admits a certain species, *non utendo aliquibus illicitis verbis vel factis*—" which does not permit any illicit *words* or *actions*." Unless he is thinking of song and dance merely, Aquinas seems to be describing what are in reality dramatic shows. A century later, in a *Tretise of miraclis pleyinge*, an anonymous, and evidently Wyclifite, English author attacks the miracle cycles, but describes as existing alongside of these miracles " other japis " and parallels " to pley in myriclis " with " to pley in rebaudye "

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[1] The Latin *ioculator* or *iocularis* has been connected with the Greek γελωτοποιος or μιμος γελοιων. The word appears in Old French as *jogleor*, in Spanish as *juglar*, in Italian as *giocolatore*, in Old High German as [illegible], in Middle High German as [illegible], in modern German as *Gaukler*, and in English as *juggler*.

[2] " There are three kinds of *histriones*. Some transform and transfigure their bodies with indecent dance and gesture, now indecently unclothing themselves, now putting on horrible masks. . . . There are besides others who do no work, but act criminally, not having any certain domicile ; these frequent the Courts of the great and say scandalous and shameful things concerning those who are not present so as to delight the rest. . . . There is yet a third class of *histriones* who play musical instruments for the delectation of men, and of these there are two types. Some frequent public drinking places and lascivious gatherings, and sing there diverse songs to move men to lasciviousness. Besides these there are others, who are called *joculatores*, who sing of the deeds of princes and the lives of the saints."

(ribaldry). These two references seem conclusive. Perhaps we might add to them a sentence written by William Fitzstephen (*c.* 1170–82) in his life of St Thomas à Becket:

> Lundonia pro spectaculis theatralibus, pro ludis scaenicis, ludos habet sanctiores, representationes miraculorum quae sancti confessores operati sunt, seu representationes passionum quibus claruit constantia martyrum.[1]

Perhaps Fitzstephen was thinking only of classical times; perhaps, however, in his contrast, he was thinking of secular farces—*ludi scaenici*—than which the London miracles were so much more sanctified.

(5) Literary relics of this secular play are not completely lacking. From the seventh, eighth, or ninth century comes a little dialogue in Latin, spoken by Terentius (Terence) and a *Persona Delusoris*, and evidently intended as a prologue, whether for a revival of a Terentian comedy or of a newer farce we cannot tell. From England comes, in the vernacular, an interesting fourteenth-century text called an *Interludium de Clerico et Puella* ("*An Interlude of a Clerk and a Girl*"). This latter consists of two scenes. In the first a girl repulses a clerk who has offered love to her; in the second the clerk goes to Mome Helwis and begs her to aid him. The piece is incomplete, but it is definitely dramatic. Still further in France there is *Le Garçon et l'Aveugle*, belonging to the thirteenth century and evidently in the farce tradition. Other early pieces remain of various types, but these two, the English *interludium* and the French farce, most clearly preserve the relics of antiquity.

(6) Besides these regular plays performed by living actors, we have also to take into account the production of puppet or marionette plays by strolling entertainers. The marionette tradition is a long one, and there seems to be evidence to show that all through the Dark Ages performances of this kind were given in village and city. At a wedding about the year 1285 "*L'us fai lo juee dels barastelz*,"[2] while mention of "*cimils*" and "*barastelz*"[3] is fairly frequent, both in France and in Italy. These men, the *bastaxi* or *joueurs des basteaulx*,[4] must have had playlets for their jointed wooden dolls, and the playlets may well have had some connexion with the ancient repertory of the mimes.

(7) Finally, there is the question of the handing down from Roman times of stock characters—a question, however, which cannot be discussed in this section. At present, it is a point which must merely be borne in mind for later reference.[5] Even without this last piece of evidence there seems plentiful proof for the presence during the so-called Dark and Middle Ages of men who, calling themselves *histriones*, *mimi*, *jongleurs*, and *ministri* or *ministralli*, inherited some at least of the traditions of the Roman mime, and who passed these traditions on, now in a debased form freely mingled with acrobatics and dancing, now in the ever-popular puppet-show, and now in a form of more literary proportions, destined ultimately to flourish once again as the interlude.

(ii) THE GROWTH OF MEDIEVAL DRAMA

The drama of modern Europe, however, did not ultimately spring from, although it may later have been deeply influenced by, the traditions passed on by wandering entertainers from Imperial Rome.[6] As is well known, the source of that modern drama is to be sought for in the heart of the Catholic Church. Finding its basis in the symbolic nature of the service of the Mass, drama developed out of the desire on the part of the clergy to place the salient facts of Christ's life more realistically before their congregations. At the two great festivals of the Church, Easter and Christmas, arose little dramas, or dramatic scenes, which displayed the birth and the death of Jesus. The story of these two dramatic scenes (generally called liturgical dramas because still associated with the service or liturgy) has often been told and need not be repeated in any detail here. Only such few facts as may serve to make plain the setting are required.

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[1] "London, instead of theatrical spectacles and scenic shows, has more sacred plays, representations of miracles which the saintly confessors have wrought or representations of the sufferings by which the constancy of martyrs has been made manifest."

[2] "A puppet show was presented."

[3] "Monkeys and puppets."

[4] The forms in the quotations given above are mostly Provençal.

[5] See *infra*, p. 78.

[6] While the mime tradition has nothing directly to do with the formation of the medieval sacred drama in its origins, it is probable that at least some of the clerics interested in the development of Church drama were inspired by a desire to counteract the licentious entertainments of the wandering *jongleurs*. Later the farce tradition entered in to colour the stock portraits of Noah's wife, Joseph, the shepherds, and the torturers of Christ.

The earliest form of the Easter play is a piece of four-lined dialogue in which a couple of priests, arraying themselves in white as angels, are confronted by two other priests whose robes show that they are women.

Quem quaeritis in sepulchro, o Christicolae?

" Whom do you seek in the sepulchre, O Christian women? " asks one of the angels.

Iesum Nazarenum crucifixum, o coelicolae,

" Jesus of Nazareth Who was crucified, O heavenly ones," the women reply, and are immediately answered:

Non est hic: surrexit sicut praedixerat.
Ite, nuntiate quia surrexit de sepulchro.

" He is not here: He has arisen even as He foretold. Go, announce that He is arisen from the sepulchre."

It is here evident that we have the foundations of what is true drama, and, the scene pleasing the audience, additions soon crept in. Mary Magdalen lingers behind and meets Christ clad as a gardener; Peter and John run frantically toward the sepulchre, one outstripping the other; the Marys buy perfumes from a little stall set outside the fictitious tomb. At Christmas there is the same development. The shepherds see the star which heralds the birth of Christ, and come to lay their rustic gifts on His cradle. Later three Kings come with their more precious presents; and, still later, Herod rants and raves when he hears that a King of Kings has been born into the world.

All of this, of course, is in Latin, but soon vernacular comes to take its place, and portions of the liturgical drama, as in the English Shrewsbury fragments, are spoken in medieval French or German or English, for, it must be remembered, this was no national development, but a movement which is to be traced in almost every European country. The next stage is the separation of the primitive play from the regular Church services. Partly because these dramas were growing so rapidly in extent, partly because the largest churches were not sufficiently great to accommodate all the vast concourse of people who flocked to see the plays, the drama was moved outside on to the steps of the great west door, the spectators standing in the churchyard without. Then came doubt in the minds of the ecclesiastical authorities. This thing which they had called into being was becoming too great a force in the lives of the people; and accordingly came edict after edict, criticism after criticism, until the clergy were prohibited from taking part in performances —at least in such performances as were conducted outside the walls of the church itself. The drama, however, had been born and had grown into a lusty and lovable child; it could not die now, and the *rôle* of guardian was assumed by the town gilds, which at that time were the greatest of all social forces. While the subject matter of the plays remained still Biblical, they were worked up into regular mystery or miracle cycles, dealing with the entire story of the Old and New Testaments, together with some Apocryphal matter gratuitously thrown in. Thus they were performed by the various gilds on certain days of festival, notably that of Corpus Christi. In France the trades-folk hardly took such a share in the performance, their place being taken by special companies (of amateurs and of professionals), the most important of which was the famous Confrérie de la

Passion, which endured to the sixteenth century; but the fundamental development was the same. The famous French *Mystère du Viel Testament* is the counterpart of our Towneley, Chester, York, and Coventry cycles.

Some centuries after the mystery cycles had been established there arose the form of play known as the *Morality*, in which abstract qualities were made the *dramatis personae* and where the story is told of Everyman's temptation, fall, and salvation. Some of these at least may have been professional rather than amateur in character. They were followed, in England, by the *interludes*, rude one-act debates or farces, a type of comic drama which had appeared some considerable time before in France, and which may preserve relics of the Roman mime tradition. It is the theatres, or, more correctly, the acting-places, used in these various performances that we have now to consider.

(iii) Medieval Theatres and Mise-en-Scène

As might naturally be supposed, we cannot describe the appearance of any one theatre used in medieval times. The question is rather one of the theatres (in the broadest sense) employed during those years between the appearance of the first liturgical drama and the comic interludes of the sixteenth century. In general, we may divide these theatres into several main groups, each to be considered separately: (1) the church as a theatre; (2) the church-like arrangement of the acting-place when first the drama was brought to the open air; (3) the stationary setting; (4) the pageant; (5) the round; and (6) the curtained platform.

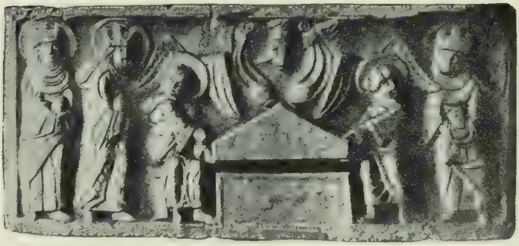

Fig. 52. The Sepulchre

Note will be taken of the angels who raise the lid of the (practicable) sarcophagus. The original is in the Church of St Paul at Dax. From Émile Male, *L'Art religieux du xii^e siècle en France.*

(1) We start first, then, with the arrangements made within the church for the performance of the liturgical plays. The sepulchre used at the Easter play could be of various kinds. At first no doubt it was merely an *assimilatio quaedam sepulchri*, a kind of symbol of a sepulchre arranged at the high altar to the east of the church, but this soon gave way to a regularly built tomb, whether of wood or iron, set usually in the north aisle. Some indication of what this sepulchre looked like is provided for us in details of twelfth-century church architecture. The connexion between the dramatic performances and the sculptured art of the medieval period was first suggested by Cahier and Martin in their study of the cathedral at Bourges, and since the appearance of their book in 1841 many efforts have been made by the art critics to trace the influence of the mysteries upon the pictured scenes showing the chief episodes in the scriptural narrative. The principal work in this direction has been that of M. Émile Male, who has devoted chapters of his volumes and special articles to this subject. It is impossible here to indicate the many points of connexion; one must suffice as a typical example. Up to the twelfth century Christ's tomb is nearly always shown, in conventional Byzantine manner, as an architectural building with two arches. With the development of the liturgical play, however, new designs enter in. The tomb is now clearly a sarcophagus, sometimes with the lid half-open or wholly open (Fig. 52) and frequently accompanied by an angel who points within as if saying *Non est hic* (Fig. 53). Still further, Christ Himself, Who is never depicted by Byzantine artists as coming from the sepulchre, is now shown rising out of the

sarcophagus as He did in the primitive dramas (Fig. 54). In these liturgical plays, then, we get a double arrangement with the tomb to the east, or, more commonly, to the north, of the church. While costume and accompanying gesture developed rapidly, little more was done at this stage to elaborate the *mise-en-scène* in the theatre-church.

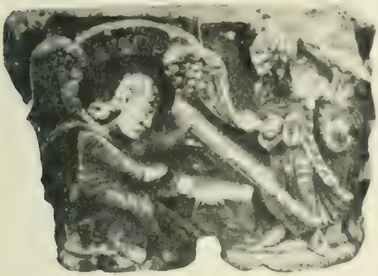
Fig. 53. Christ rising from the Tomb

Note will be taken of the realistic treatment both of the sarcophagus lid and of the figures depicted.
From É. Male, *op. cit.*

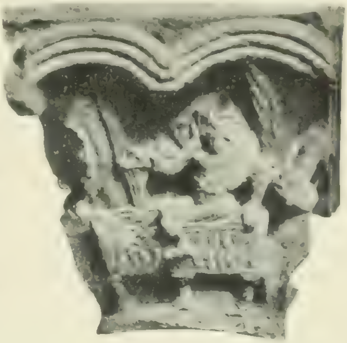
Fig. 54. Christ rising from the Tomb

Note will be taken of the figure of Christ half seated in the sarcophagus. The original is in the Museum of Toulouse.
From É. Male, *op. cit.*

(2) Passing from this, we reach the stage where more than the erection of a simple tomb serves as a background for the actors, but where the church is clearly in the minds of the actors. Here four texts or plans come to our aid, a twelfth- or thirteenth-century play of the *Resurrection*, a twelfth-century play of *Adam* (both French), an arrangement for a Passion play at Donaueschingen (the extant manuscript of the sixteenth century, but probably preserving traditions of a much earlier date), and another plan of a mystery play given at Lucerne in the same century. In the first of these there is a kind of preface which informs the reader of the way in which the *mansions* or houses[1] must be arranged. From this preface we learn that the crucifix appears first, no doubt in the position it would have occupied in a church above the high altar (Fig. 55). On one side, no doubt the left, there is a sepulchre, followed evidently by Heaven (Paradise). It seems probable that the Marys, the Disciples, and Nicodemus are also arranged on this left side. To the right is a prison, Hell, Pilate, Caiaphas, and Joseph. Galilee is in the centre along with Emmaus.

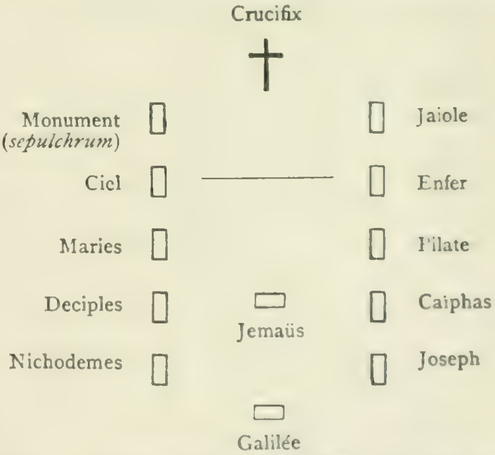

Fig. 55. The Mansions in the "Resurrection"
From Chambers, *Medieval Stage*, ii, 83.

As this is the first occasion we have had to mention the typically medieval *mansions* or houses, a word may be said before we pass to the *Adam*. For the liturgical dramas in the churches we have seen that a tomb was set up; where the perfume-selling episode was given a stall was placed elsewhere in an aisle; Herod's Court was at one place, the manger at another. Hence arose the convention of placing all the scenes of action at one time before the people. Boxes or platforms called variously *mansions*, *lieux* (*loca*), *loci*, *domus*, *estals*, *sedes*,

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[1] Cf. *infra*.

sièges, and in English *houses*, were placed alongside of each other, their positions being determined in the first instance by the geographical arrangement of the church. The *Resurrection* has thus Heaven to the left (north) of the spectator, Hell to the right (south).[1] Happily the play of *Adam* gives us some additional information. The disposition for the houses is still determined by the structure of the church. To the east stands the crucifix, to the left Heaven, and to the right Hell. This, at least, we may presume from the directions in the text. What is particularly valuable in *Adam* is the description of Paradise and Hell themselves. The Paradise, we learn

> constituatur . . . loco eminenciori ; circumponantur cortine et panni serici, ea altitudine, ut persone, que in paradiso erunt, possint videri sursum ad humeros ; serantur odoriferi flores et frondes ; sint in eo diverse arbores et fructus in eis dependentes, ut amenissimus locus videatur. . . . Quicunque nominaverit paradisum, respiciat eum et manu demonstret.[2]

Of Hell we learn that

> singuli alii diaboli illos venientes monstrabunt, et eos suscipient et in infernum mittent ; et in eo facient fumum magnum exsurgere, et vociferabuntur inter se in inferno gaudentes, et collident caldaria et lebetes suos, ut exterius audiantur.[3]

Evidently verisimilitude of a kind was sought after even in the twelfth century.

Next we may take the plan of the Donaueschingen mystery play (Fig. 56), which presents a more complicated arrangement. Here clearly the three cross divisions indicate sanctuary, choir, and nave. Heaven in this case is in the east (*i.e.*, at the altar), and Hell is placed on the left instead of on the right, *i.e.*, in the north-west, but its position is determined by the fact that it is the place farthest from Heaven.[1]

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[1] The prologue runs as follows:

"En ceste manere recitom
La seinte resurreccion.
Primerement apareillons
Tus les lius et les mansions :
Le crucifix primerement
E puis apres le monument.
Une jaiole i deit aver
Pur les prisons emprisoner.
Enfer seit mis de cele part,
E mansions de l'altre part,
E puis le ciel ; et as estals
Primes Pilate od ces vassals.
Sis u set chivaliers aura.
Caiphas en l'altre serra ;
Od lui seit la jeuerie,
Puis Joseph, cil d'Arimachie.
Et quart liu seit danz Nichodemes.
Chescons i ad od sei les soens.
El quint les deciples Crist.
Les treis Maries saient el sist.
Si seit pourvéu que l'om face
Galilée en mi la place ;
Jemaüs uncore i seit fait,
U Jhesu fut al hostel trait."

"In this respect let us recite
The Resurrection play to-night.
First of all we detail here
All the houses that appear :
First a crucifix we fit ;
The sepulchre comes after it.
There too must be a prison cell
To keep the prisoners in well.
On that side Hell must be,
Mansions on the other see.
And Heaven is there, and then
A place for Pilate and his men.
Six or seven courtiers there,
And Caiaphas on another chair.
The Jewish folk are nearby
With Joseph of Arimachie.
Don Nichodeme comes fourth of all.
Each has his servants within call.
Next the disciples' company we see,
And sixth there are the Maries three.
Galilee is placed fair
In the middle of the square ;
Emmaus also must be reared
Where Jesus to his friends appeared."

With this prologue may be compared another cited from manuscript in Gustave Cohen's *Histoire de la Mise en Scène*, pp. 76–77. There too Paradise and Hell are on opposite sides.

[2] "Is to be placed on a raised spot ; curtains and silk cloths are to be hung about it at such a height that persons in Paradise are visible from the shoulders. Fragrant flowers and leaves are scattered there ; in it are divers trees with hanging fruit so as to give the impression of a most lovely place. . . . Whoever names Paradise must look toward it and indicate it with his hand." The terrestrial Paradise in the famous *Mystère du Viel Testament* is similarly adorned ; it is "bien garny de toutes fleurs, arbres, fruictz et autres plaisances, et au meilleu l'arbre de vie plus excellent que tous les autres." A technical word for the *loggie* of French theatres—'*Paradise*'—is a relic of the raised Paradise described here. Its elevated position may be due to the use of choir galleries in the medieval church.

[3] "Certain other devils point at them as they come, and seize them and bear them to Hell ; and in Hell they shall make a great smoke arise, and they shall shout out to each other in Hell in jubilation, and clash their pots and kettles, so as to be heard without."

The plans of the Easter play presented on two successive days at Lucerne provide a fitting parallel. Here the market square was used as the 'theatre' with Heaven, the seat of the Pater Eternus and His seven angels, at that end on to which abutted the Cornmarket Street and the New Place. The plan showing the arrangement for the second day (Fig. 57) gives a view of the square, while the turreted Heaven mansion is clearly delineated in the first plan (Fig. 58). At the opposite end of the square, and to the left-hand side, a rough sketch of a many-toothed monster marked "Die Höll" indicates the seat of "Lucifer & 6 Tüffel." The other mansions, as is evident, are set along the four sides of the square. From the sketches some of these seem to have been ordinary timbered houses, others decorated in a manner peculiar to their purposes. "Der Tempel" on the right-hand side has thus a kind of Eastern cupola, apparently surmounted by a crescent.

(3) This principle of staging was kept also in the great stationary settings devoted in France to the mysteries. Two illustrations of these give us a clear idea of their scope. The first is the miniature by Jehan Fouquet, showing the martyrdom of St Apollonia (Fig. 59). Here in the foreground we see the torturing of the saint, and behind is arranged a series of *mansions* with steps leading down to the ground-level. To the left of the spectator there is a box full of angels surrounding a throne which is evidently a portion of Heaven. Next comes a house of trumpeters providing celestial music, followed by a large box with an empty throne, probably left vacant by the Emperor, who is standing immediately behind St Apollonia. Immediately to the right of this *mansion* of the Emperor are two boxes, both apparently filled with women and now unidentifiable, followed by Hell on the extreme edge. It will be noted that Hell is in two parts. Above is a platform on which two devils are standing; below is a great gaping monster's head, and from it issues a brute-headed figure.

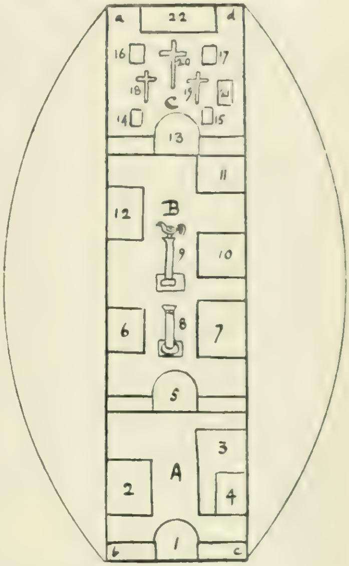

Fig. 56. THE MANSIONS IN THE DONAUESCHINGEN MYSTERY PLAY

1, First door. 2, Hell. 3, Garden of Gethsemane. 4, Mount Olivet. 5, Second door. 6, Herod. 7, Pilate. 8, Pillar of scourging. 9, Pillar for cock. 10, Caiaphas. 11, Annas. 12, Last Supper. 13, Third door. 14, 15, 16, 17, Graves. 18, 19, Thieves' crosses. 20, Cross. 21, Holy Sepulchre. 22, Heaven.

From Chambers, *Medieval Stage*, ii, 84.

The Valenciennes miniature of the sixteenth century shows us a similar arrangement. The *mansions* here are set in a row with an open acting-place in front. To the extreme left is Nazareth (Fig. 60), followed by a small temple before which is a gate. Jerusalem succeeds, and then a castle. The House of Bishops and the Golden Gate lead toward the extreme right, where appear a prison and Hell. It will be noted that in front of the Golden Gate is a small lake with a ship and that Hell is once more of two parts. Behind is a house of torture, peopled by demons. In front is the terrible monster's head from which some devils are issuing.

For our purposes, probably the most interesting of all these *mansions* is the last noticed, because it was to Hell, and after that—*longo intervallo*—to Heaven, that the medieval machinists and

---

[1] Whereas the position of Hell to the south seems due to the presence in the church of crypt stairs to the right side of the altar, the position of Hell to the north (*cf.* Figs. 56, 57, 58, and 62) is probably due ultimately to the fact that "evil appeareth out of the north" (Jer. vi, 1).

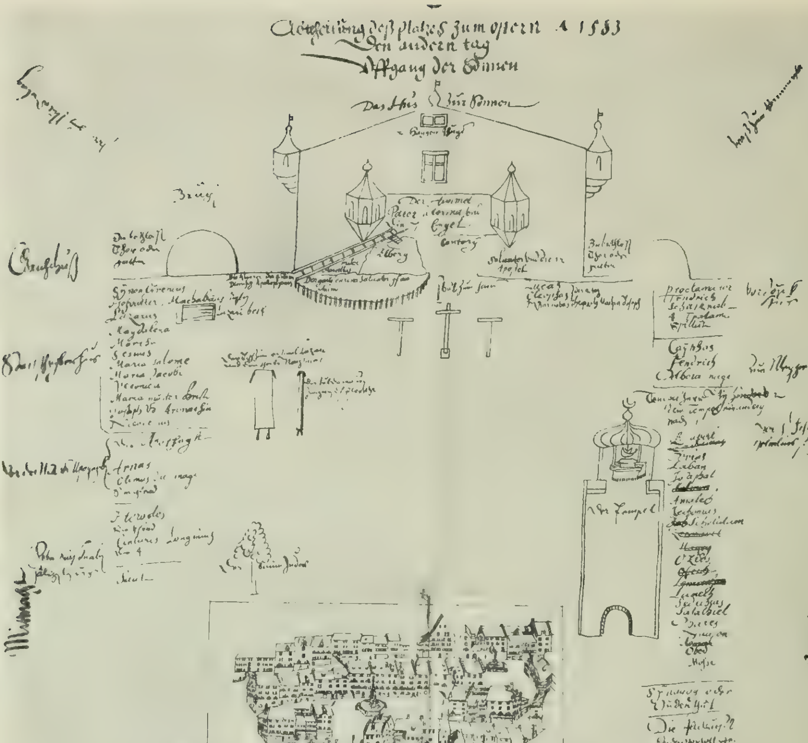
Abteilung deß platzes zum ostern A 1583
Den andern tag
Vffgang der Sonnen
Das Hus zur Sonnen
Pater
Engel
Olberg
Brugg
Lazarus
Magdalena
Martha
Jesmus
Maria salome
Maria Jacobi
Veronica
Maria mutter
Joseph vo Arimathia
Annas
Centurio Longinus
Proclamator
Cayphas
Der Tempel
Laban
Salathiel
Obed
Mitnacht
Mittag
Nidergang

Fig. 57. THE LUCERNE EASTER PLAY: SECOND DAY

From Leibing, *Die Inscenirung des zweitägigen Luzerner Osterspiels.*

'managers' devoted their attention. The two pictures of it already shown, together with another from Zurich (Fig. 63), give a fair idea of its traditional shape. The monster's head, "faicte en manière d'une grande gueule se cloant et ouvrant quand besoing en est,"[1] is probably a reminiscence of Leviathan, and is coloured in the miniatures in ſtriking hues. Here the medieval artist came moſt near to the modern elaboration of scenic background.

It has been observed in these ſtationary scenes that the *mansions* or houses were placed semicircularly or in a ſtraight line, facing an open space in which, as we see from the St Apollonia miniature, the chief action takes place. This open space gained the name of *platea* or, in English, 'playne' (plain) and was an unlocalized ſtage.[2] The demons in *Adam* run about *per plateas*, that is, on the 'ſtage,' before they approach Paradise for the purpose of tempting Eve. The *platea* was, in other words, 'anywhere.' It might remain as neutral territory, or, through the words and actions of the characters, it might be thought of by the audience as representing a definite locality. In any case, it ſtood diſtinct from the clearly localized *mansions* which remained conſtant throughout the course of the play. We shall see later how important this convention was in the development of Elizabethan ſtagecraft.

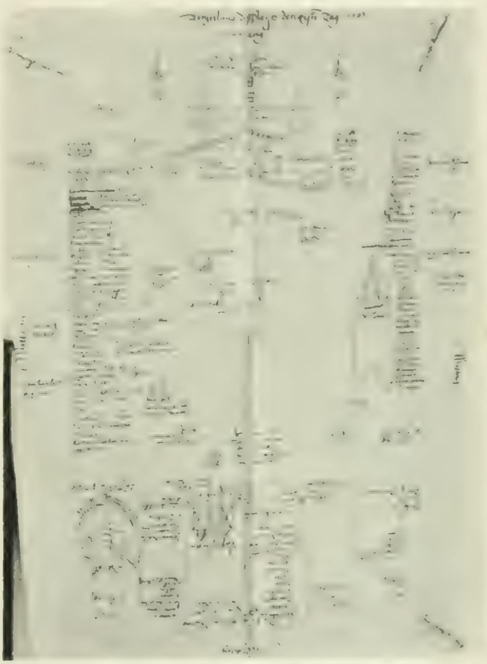

Fig. 58. THE LUCERNE EASTER PLAY: FIRST DAY

From Leibing, *op. cit.*

(4) In England the ſtationary setting, except in the form of rounds, does not seem to have been common. There the gilds preferred to ſtage their plays on what came to be known as pageants, virtually separate *mansions* of the ſtationary or ſtanding plays placed on wheels. These pageants, apparently, were drawn round a particular town when a myſtery cycle was being enacted, various individual plays taking place together.[3] Says Archdeacon Rogers of the Cheſter plays in the sixteenth century:

> They first beganne at yᵉ Abbaye gates; & when the firste pagiente was played at yᵉ Abbaye gates, then it was wheeled from thence to the pentice at yᵉ highe crosse before yᵉ Mayor; and before that was donne, the seconde came, and yᵉ firſte wente in-to the watergate streete, and from thence vnto yᵉ Bridge streete, and so all, one after an other, tell all yᵉ pagiantes weare played.

Happily we have a good deal of information concerning the character of these pageants. Archdeacon Rogers appends a little description of those used at Cheſter as

> a highe place made like a howse with ij rowmes, being open on yᵉ tope: the lower rowme they apparelled and dressed them selves; and in the higher rowme they played; and they ſtood vpon 6[4] wheeles.

---

[1] "Made like a great gargoyle which closes and opens when need be." The [illegible]

[2] In the unique Italian mystery cycle preserved in an Ashburnham manuscript, [illegible] Heaven, Hell, and the World, the last including several independent [illegible] or *luoghi deputati*. The [illegible]

[3] These English pageants are paralleled in the Netherlands by the [illegible] *Belgique*, p. 142.

[4] [illegible]

" Theatres for the severall Scenes, very large and high, placed upon wheels " is Dugdale's account, while at Norwich in 1565 the Grocers' pageant was " a Howse of Waynskott paynted and buylded on a Carte w^{t} fowre whelys." These pageants, of course, were made of wood: " Paied to Sampson Carpenter and hys man hewyng and squeryng of tymber for the Pagent " is an entry in the account book of Canterbury. Two of these typical pageants, taken from a miniature in the Bodleian Library, are shown in Fig. 61. The curtained dressing-room is quite apparent here, and there seems to be an upper story from which, in all probability, angels descended.[1] Many of the pageants, however, were made in the representation of some object. Thus at Coventry the Cappers' pageant possessed a " hell-mouth," as did that of the Drapers. The latter was provided also with a windlass, means of showing fire belching from the mouth, a barrel for simulating an earthquake, and some apparatus for setting three worlds afire. In the Digby play of *St Mary Magdalen* we are informed there was a " stage, and Helle ondyr-neth that stage." Other plays had also their special " theatres." At Hull for a Noah drama payments were made " To a shipwright for clinking Noah's ship " in 1483, while in 1494 further money was expended on " making Noah's ship " and " rigging Noah's ship." It is evident that we are not dealing here with a practical vessel such as we find delineated in the Valenciennes miniature, for a farthing was paid in 1483 " to straw and grease for wheels."

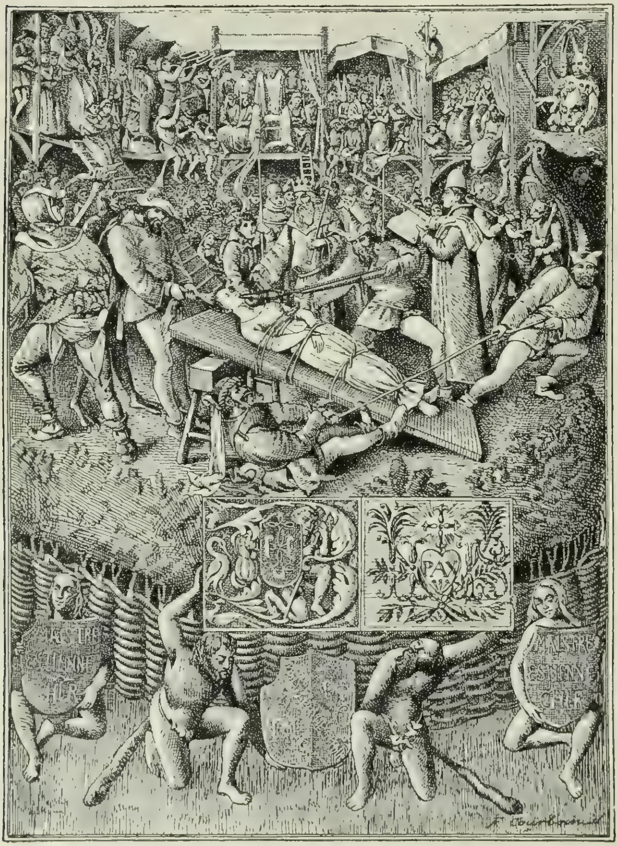

Fig. 59. THE MARTYRDOM OF ST APOLLONIA

From Mantzius, *A History of Theatrical Art in Ancient and Modern Times.*

The method of using these pageants is quite clear. The stage-level, no doubt curtained as in the Paradise of *Adam* so as to show merely the upper part of the players, was employed for localized scenes; but the street below served as an open neutral ground. At Coventry, we are informed by a stage direction, " Erode [Herod] ragis in the pagond & in the strete also," while later " the iij Kyngis speykyth in the ſtrete." The methods in use correspond exactly to those of the stationary setting.

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[1] See *infra*, p. 74. It is possible, of course, that the miniature represents puppet-shows, but the puppet-show and the pageant cannot have been far different one from another except as regards size.

(5) In France employment was occasionally made of the ſtill ſtanding Roman theatres, such as those of Nîmes, Arles, and Orange, and it is possibly the ancient Roman tradition which explains the 'rounds' in which the Cornish myſteries and some other medieval dramas were performed. Of these the moſt important are the two amphitheatres which can yet be seen at St Just and at Perranzabuloe in Cornwall. The former, of stone, has a diameter of 126 feet; the latter, of earth, is 4 feet larger. The manuscripts of the Cornish plays themselves are furnished with a plan which shows the arrangement of the various *mansions* during the performances. For the *Origo Mundi* we have *Celum* (Heaven), followed by *Tortores* (Torturers), no doubt equivalent to the Prison in the French dramas, *Infernum* (Hell), *Rex Pharao* (King Pharaoh), *Rex David*, *Rex Salomon*, *Abraham*,

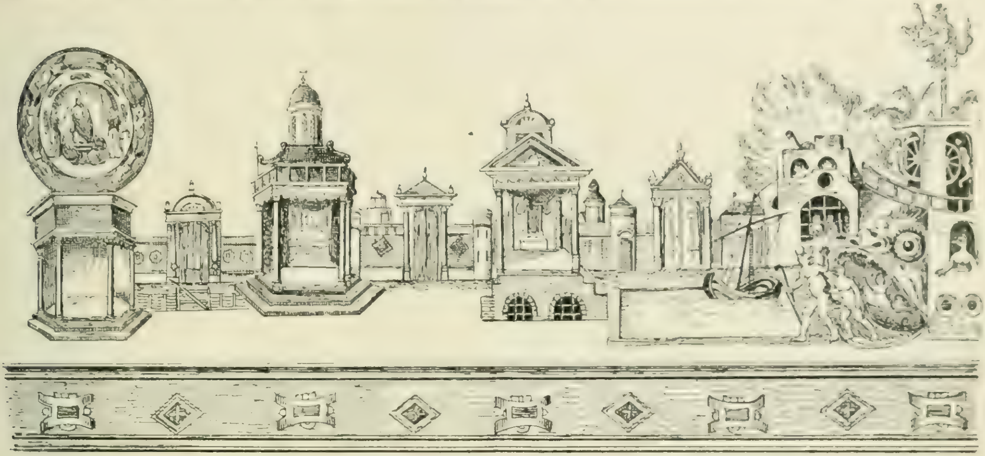

Fig. 60. THE VALENCIENNES MYSTERY PLAY

From Mantzius, *op. cit.*

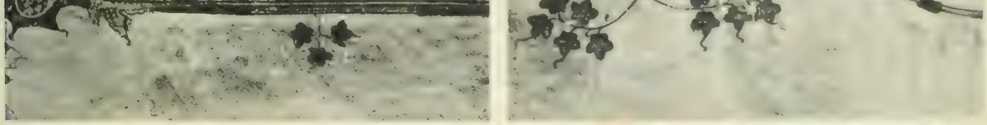

Fig. 61. TWO MEDIEVAL PAGEANTS

and *Ortus*. The arrangement of Heaven and Hell is the same in the *Resurrection* play, and a similar circle is shown for *St Meriasek*. These circular *mansions* of the Cornish plays may be compared with the interesting diagram shown in the manuscript of *The Castle of Perseverance* (reign of Henry VI). Here (Fig. 62) again is a large circle, enclosed with "watyr a bowte the place if any dyche may be mad ther[1] it schal be pleyed; or ellys that it be stronglye barryd al a bowte: & lete nowth[2] ower[3] many stytelerys[4] be withinne the place." In the midst of the circle is a castle, and below a bed for Mankind. What interests us, however, is the arrangement of the *mansions* on the edge of the circle. God's scaffold is to the east,[5] Belial comes in the north, with the World in the west and Caro in the south; Covetousness occupies the north-east. Evidently here is an arrangement which still preserves the ancient church setting whereby Heaven is set in the east over the altar. Here obviously is a general arrangement based upon that principle which has already been seen exemplified in the Donaueschingen and Lucerne settings with the north as the seat of evil.

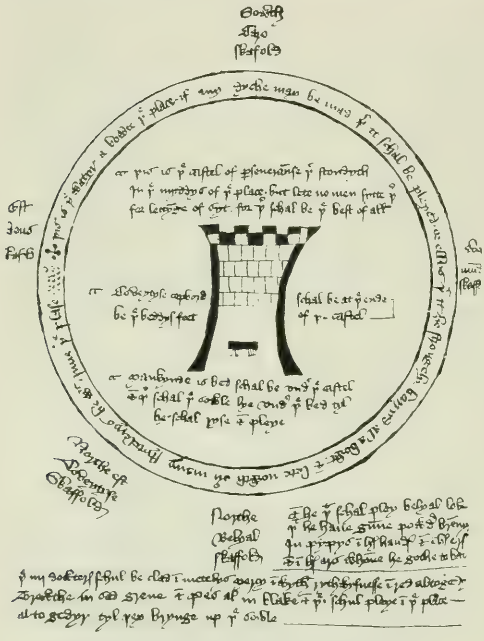

Fig. 62. PLAN FOR "THE CASTLE OF PERSEVERANCE"

The circle represents a ditch; the castle is in the centre with "Mankynde [h]is bed" below it.

(6) With the passing away of the miracle cycles, or, to speak more strictly, for the performance of those farcical interludes which were common in France and which were revived perhaps rather than instituted in England by John Heywood, such elaborate settings were quite unnecessary. The interludes were commonly played in the houses of the great and the rich; their *mise-en-scène* was of the slightest, consisting rather of properties than of scenic background. In the morality called *The Nature of the Four Elements* (early sixteenth century) a "hall" is definitely mentioned as the place of action, while "dorys" (doors) are referred to in the interlude of *Nature*. The setting of these plays, we must presume, was merely a raised daïs, probably backed by a curtain, containing movable properties such as a "stole" (*Nature*), a "thron" (*The Play of the Weather*), or a fireplace (*Iohan Iohan*). The *platea*, in other words, exists without the *mansions*. We do certainly find relics in these dramas of the older tradition; thus Mater in *Thersytes* (mid-sixteenth century) is provided with a "place which is prepared for her," while such a late play as *Mary Magdalene* in the Digby series has a fully crowded set of mansions. In the latter drama six main localities, each subdivided, are placed before the audience. (1) First comes the set used for the Biblical scenes, including the Castle of Maudelyn and the seats of the Emperor, Herod, and Pilate. (2) Hell, in two parts, follows. (3) Next we have Jerusalem with a tavern, the house of Simon Leprous, and an arbour. (4) Marcylle possesses a castle, a temple, and a sea-coast.[6] (5) Heaven above with a wilderness below is

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[1] where.
[2] not.
[3] over.
[4] Probably 'marshals.'
[5] See *supra*, p. 66.
[6] This seacoast was visited by a practicable ship, which entered "with a mery song."

near by, as is also (6) the Holy Land, which contains a separate mountain. This *Mary Magdalen*, however, really belongs to earlier traditions, and we may say that the majority of the moralities as well as the interludes had a much simpler setting. Pictorial examples of this platform stage have been preserved in France. Thus Jean de Gourmont (mid-sixteenth century) has one which shows a trestled stage, curtained at the back and full of performers (Fig. 64). A similar scene has been engraved by H. Liefrinck (*c.* 1540–80). It is headed *Comedie ou farce de six parsonnages*, and again shows a bare stage with curtains from which one character is peering (Fig. 65). On the stage in the centre is an old man, somewhat Pantaloonish in appearance. At him a masked servant or another old man is staring; at his side are two women and a character who may be either a young lover or a *capitano*.[1] These illustrations may serve to show the kind of stage which was utilized by the interlude performers.

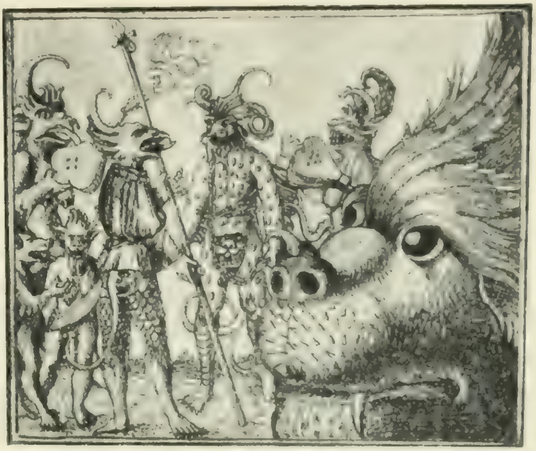

Fig. 63. Medieval Devil Costumes at Zurich

(iv) Machinery, Effects, and Costumes

That the medieval stage did not lack machinery entirely, in France, in Italy, and in England, is amply proved by stage directions and by eyewitnesses' accounts. In France a head of St Peter, severed, jumped thrice upon the stage, and "à chacun yst une fontaine."[2] There too the Holy Ghost descended like a "grand brandon de feu artificiellement fait par eaue-de-vie,"[3] while a Virgin moved her head and arms, and raised her eyes to heaven. Italy, naturally, because of her artists and painters, was not slow to make full use of these machines—*ingegni*, devices, they were called to correspond with the French *secrets* or *feintes*. Vasari notes that one of the early masters of Italian perspective, Filippo Brunelleschi, invented or superintended the mechanical arrangements for a Paradise, which may have come near to those described by the same author elsewhere. Here there was—

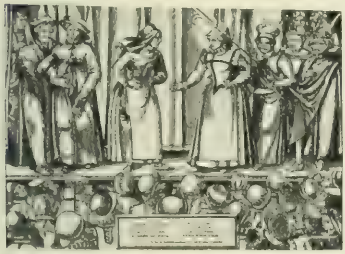

Fig. 64. A Platform Stage of the Sixteenth Century

Print by Jean de Gourmont, from Mantzius, *op. cit.*

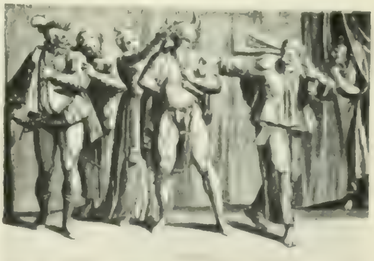

Fig. 65. A Platform Stage of the Sixteenth Century

Print by H. Liefrinck, from Mantzius, *op. cit.*

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[1] See *infra*, p. 110.

[2] "At each jump flowed a fountain."

[3] [illegible]

> un altro cielo sopra la tribuna maggiore, nel quale alcune ruote grandi fatte a guisa d'arcolai, che dal centro alla superficie movevano con belissimo ordine dieci giri per i dieci cieli, erano tutti pieni di lumicini, rappresentanti le stelle. . . .[1]

Mechanical effects find frequent mention. In a *Passione* "apronsi li monumenti, e vengono li tremuoti, e tenebre appariscono,"[2] while in a *San Lorenzo* play "viene una saetta dal cielo, e fallo rovinar tutto in pezzi."[3]

Effects of a similar kind, although not quite so ornate, were known in England. "Fyftie fadam of lyne for the cloudes" figured in the accounts of Chelmsford in 1562–63; while the Digby *St Mary Magdalene* had a "hevyne" (Heaven) which could open. The Cornish plays presented "the father . . . in a clowde," and when he spoke "y^e^ levys" (leaves) opened. There Paradise, like the Paradise of the French *Adam*, had "ii fayre trees," a "fowntaine," and "fyne flowers." At Dublin we find a camel which is "peynted" and evidently carried by several "Portors."[4] In many of the English mysteries ascents and descents of angels are frequent, while in *The Salutation and Conception* of the Coventry series

> þe[5] holy gost discendit with iij bemys[6] to our lady, the sone of þe godhed nest[7] with iij bemys . to the holy gost the fadyr godly with iij bemys to þe sone. And so entre all thre to here bosom.

There are flaming swords and burning altars in the Ludus Coventriae plays of *The Fall of Man* and *Cain and Abel*, while the York cycle abounds in sudden gleams of light.[8] The play of *Mary Magdalene* is likewise rich in visual effects. A "bad angyl" there enters "into hell with thondyr"; some devils set a "house one a fyere"; a "moment"[9] is made to "tremyll and quake"; while later "a clowd" comes "frome hevene, and" sets "þe tempyl one a fyer."

Most realistic, however, must have been the effects connected with Hell. "A skin of parchment and gunpowder" was bought at Kingston-on-Thames in 1520, and from other records we know well what it was used for. In the Cornish plays Lucifer "goeth downe to hell appareled fowle w^th^ fyre about hem"; "he that schal pley belyal" (Belial) in *The Castle of Perseverance* is bidden to "loke that he have gunne powder brennying in pypys in his hands and in his ers"; while the Vice in *A Play of Love* "cometh in ronnynge sodenly aboute the place among the audiens with a hye copyr tank on his hed full of squybs fyred." That this was not merely a national custom is proved by a description of similar demons in France:

> Adonc fit la monstre de la Diablerie parmy la ville et le marché. Les diables estoient tous capparrassonnés de peaux de loups, de veaulx, et de beliers, passementées de testes de moutons, de cornes de bœufz, et de grands havetz de cuisine: ceinctz de grosses courroies, esquelles pendoient grosses cymbales de vaches, et sonnettes de muletz à bruit horrifique. Tenoient en main aucuns bastons noirs pleins de fusées: autres portoient longs tizons allumés, sur lesquelz à chascun carrefour jettoient pleines poignées de parasine en pouldre, dont sortoit feu et fumée terrible.[10]

---

[1] "Another sky above the great rostrum, in which were some huge wheels constructed as if in the air, moving from the centre to the edges in most beautiful order, ten orbits for the ten heavens, all full of little lamps, representing the stars. . . ."

[2] "The monuments are opened, earthquakes come, and darkness descends."

[3] "A bolt comes from on high and casts it all in ruins."

[4] This, it is true, is in a processional show rather than in a play.

[5] the.

[6] beams.

[7] next.

[8] *Bethlehem:* A! lord God! what light is þis
That comes shynyng þus sodenly?
Harrowing of Hell: A light I woll þei haue
To schewe þame I shall come sone.

[9] idol.

[10] "Then the show of the Devils was made in the town and square. These devils were all clad in skins of wolves, calves, and rams, surmounted with sheep-heads, bull-horns, and cockscombs: girdles of thick skins, from which hung cows' or mules' bells with horrible noise. Some carried in their hands black rods full of squibs: others long flaming spars, on which at each turn they threw handfuls of powdered resinous pitch from which issued terrible flame and smoke."

This description of the costumes of the medieval devils is exceedingly interesting, and may be compared with the pictures of such characters in Figs. 60 and 63. The animal heads and grotesque dresses seem to have been a traditional stage convention. Of the other costumes of actors in England we have nothing but vague references, but such as they are they have their interest. Masks or "visors" seem to have been fairly common. In 1391 a list of properties at Beverley in Yorkshire included

> j karre,[1] viij hespis, xviij stapels, ij visers, ij wenges angeli . . . j worme . . . ij paria camisarum[2] and j gladius.[3]

Visors formed an entry in the accounts of Bungay, Suffolk, in 1566, and an item in the Canterbury records is the "payntyng of the hede and the Aungell of the pagent." Lucifer in the Cornish mysteries has a serpent form "w^th^ a virgyn face & yolowe heare vpon her head." Wigs, with or without masks, were also freely utilized, as is indicated by a record of 1504 at Leicester:

> Paid for a pound of hemp to mend the angels heads, iiij^d^.

In 1585 at Twickesbury there were "eight heads of hair for the Apostles, and ten beards, and a face or vizier for the Devil."

As for the costumes themselves there are many entries, but few descriptions. A Vice's coat at Chelmsford in the sixteenth century is mentioned but not detailed; there also we learn of a coat "of lether for Christ" and are treated besides to a pretty little list of properties:

> ij vyces coats, and ij scalpes, ij daggers (j dagger wanted).
> v prophets cappes (one wantinge).
> iij flappes for devils.
> iiij shepehoks, iiij whyppes (but one gone).

"A new coat & a peir of hoes [hose] for Gabriell" appears at Coventry in 1544, while three skins were used for Noah's coat at Hull in 1494. Three yards of "dorneck" were used for a player's coat at Kingston in 1513–14, where likewise was demanded a pennyworth of thread "for the resurrection." "Jesus hoose" are mentioned at Leicester in 1504; while Norwich provides an interesting record of

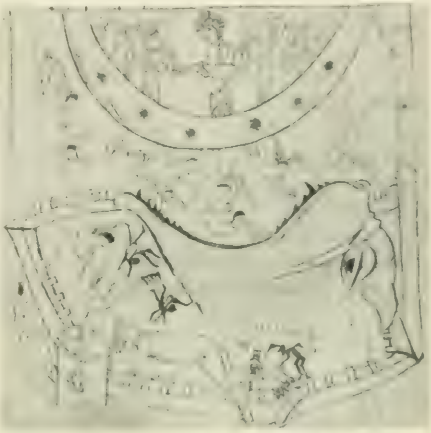

Fig. 66. Hell-mouth from the Cædmon Manuscript (Eleventh Century)

By permission of Sir Israel Gollancz

> A cote & hosen w^t^[4] a bagg & capp for dolo^r^,[5] steyned.
> 2 cotes & a payre hosen for Eve, stayned.
> A cote & hosen for Adam, Steyned.
> A cote w^t^ hosen & tayle for y^e^ serpente, steyned, w^t^ a w^t^ heare. . . .[6]
> An Angell's Cote & over hoses of Apis Skynns. . . .
> A face & heare for y^e^ Father.
> 2 hearys[7] for Adam & Eve.[8]

The costumes of Adam and Eve are more fully described for the Cornish dramas. There "Adam and Eva" are "aparlet [apparelled] in whytt lether," no doubt representing skin, and a stage direction bids "ffig leaves redy to cover ther members," the pair being provided later with "garments of skynnes."[1] The costumes, except for a few thus distinctly outlined, were no doubt the ordinary dresses of the day. At Worcester in 1576 an inventory hardly distinguishes any save a king's and a Devil's:

---

[1] car or pageant.
[2] pairs of shirts.
[3] sword.
[4] with.
[5] dolor, grief.
[6] white hair, or wig.
[7] hairs, or wigs.
[8] A very similar list of costumes for an Italian play in 1339 is given in A. D'Ancona, *Origini del Teatro Italiano* (1891), i, 104.

> A gowne of freres gyrdles. A woman's gowne. A K^s cloke of Tysshew. A Jerkyn and a payer of breeches. A lytill cloke of tysshew. A gowne of silk. A Jerkyn of greene, 2 cappes, and the devils apparell.

It is possible, however, that colour played a fair part in the general symbolism of the drama. The stage directions in *The Castle of Perseverance* thus bid that

> the iiij dowters schul be clad in mentelys, Mercy in wyth,[2] rythwysnesse in red al togedyr, Trewthe in sad grene, & Pes al in blake,

while in the French *Adam* "Chaym sit indutus rubeis vestibus, Abel vero albis."[3] No doubt this general scheme was followed out in other plays. Nothing, however, do we have so detailed as certain descriptions such as that written by Jacques Thiboust of a costume worn by Nesron (Nero) in an *Actes des Apôtres* of 1536:

> Nesron . . . estoit vestu d'une saye de veloux bleu toute pourfilée d'or à grands rinceaux d'antique, et découpée a taille ouverte, par ou apparoissoit et flocquetoit a gros bouillons la doublure, qui estoit d'ung satin cramoisy, pourfilée semblablement d'ung autre ouvrage de fleurons et entrelacs de fil d'or; elle estoit doublée de veloux cramoisy a collet de mesme, faict a pointes renversées, entremesleés l'une dans l'autre, et semées par grands prodigalité de grosses perles, aux quelles pointes pendoient grosses houppes d'autres perles . . . Sa couronne d'or a trois branches estoit remplie de tant de sortes de pierreries . . . Il portait l'un de ses pieds sur une escrin couvert de drap d'argent et semé de quelque nombre de pierreries . . . Portoit en sa main une hache d'armes bien dorée; son port estoit hautain et son maintien magnifique; son dit tribunal et lui dessus estoit porté par huict roys captifs qui estoient dedans, desquels on ne voyoit seulement que les testes couronnés de couronnes d'or.[4]

With this account may be compared the notes regarding the costumes to be used for the sixteenth-century Lucerne play mentioned above. There, for example,

> Pater aeternus soll haben das gewöhnliche Diadem, schön altväterisch, graues langes Haar und Bart. Einen Reichsapfel in der Hand . . . . Eine weisse Rippe im Aermel.[5]

(v) Actors and Performance

Concerning the actors in the English mystery plays little more may be said than has been given above. The gilds, having taken over the management of the cycles, provided the actors from among their own members. Generally these actors were paid a small fee. At Coventry one man received three shillings and fourpence "for pleayng God," another fourpence "for hangyng Judas," another fourpence "for Coc croyng [cock-crowing]." Five shillings was apportioned "to iij whyte [saved] sollys [souls]," five shillings "to iij blake sollys," and one shilling and fourpence "to ij wormes of conscyence." Similar records occur in the accounts of other towns. At Hull one Thomas Sawyr received tenpence for "playing God," a Jenkin Smith received one shilling for taking Noah, whose wife was awarded eightpence. This was in 1494; eleven years previously Noah and his wife got only one shilling and sixpence between them, and God only sixpence. The salaries of actors were evidently rising.

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[1] It would seem that in France, if not in England, complete nudity on the stage was known. In the fourteenth-century *Miracles de Notre Dame* (Anciens textes français, iii, 124 125) a woman disguised as a monk is, on death, revealed on the stage "toute nue."

[2] white.

[3] "Cain is to be clad in red garments, Abel in white."

[4] "Nero was clad in a lined cloak, all blue striped with golden bars after the antique style, and slit with open seams so that the lining of crimson satin appeared, adorned also with another design of ornaments and knots of gold thread; it was lined at the collar with crimson velvet, made with inverted points, intermingled one with another, and prodigally scattered with large pearls. At these points hung large strings of other pearls. . . . His golden crown of three tiers was decorated with all sorts of precious stones. . . . He supported one of his feet on a stool covered with silver cloth and ornamented with a large number of precious stones. . . . In his hand he carried a beautifully gilded battleaxe, his carriage was haughty and his demeanour grand; his tribunal and he were carried by eight captive kings who were within and of whom nothing was seen save their golden-crowned heads."

[5] "The Pater aeternus must have the customary diadem. He is an old man with long grey hair and beard. An imperial orb is in his hand. . . . A white rib in his sleeve."

It is probable that, while the parts of many later morality plays were still performed by amateurs, professional and semi-professional performers were coming to take their share in the development of English drama. These professional players will, of course, be considered when we reach the time of Queen Elizabeth.

In France conditions were similar and dissimilar. The *corps municipaux*, the town gilds, there as in England, took a large part in the organization of the mysteries, but they shared their activities with several others apparently unknown in England. The *confréries pieuses* played a prominent *rôle* in the management of the cycles, most famous of all being the Confrérie de la Passion established at Paris by letters patent of Charles VI, on December 4, 1402. It is with the establishment of this company at the Hôpital de la Trinité that we first meet in Europe with a permanent dramatic troupe settled at a definite theatre. The Confrérie de la Passion will also occupy our attention later. Alongside of these *confréries pieuses* there existed a number of peculiar groups of actors, professional and amateur. The Goliardi still busied themselves in the organization of performances. Les Basochiens, famous for their *triomphes* and *tableaux* "sans parler ne sans signer," laid their impress on the interlude stage. Les Sots, clad in hood of yellow and green, ass-ears, and costume of similar colours, the green signifying hope of renewal and the yellow gaiety, passed over great tracts of France, at their head the well-known Enfants Sans-Souci. Finally there were the many *confréries des fous*. Deriving, apparently, from the notorious medieval Feast of Fools, these men, called Cornards or Connards at Rouen and Évreux because of their horned caps, Suppôts du Seigneur de la Coquille at Lyon, Sots at Amiens, Foux at Auxerre, L'Abbaye joyeuse de Lescache Profit at Cambrai, Gaillardons at Chalon-sur-Saône, Diables at Chaumont, Trompettes-Jongleurs at Chauny, and Mauvaises Braies at Laon, played interlude and scandalous farce to the shame of many serious men and the delight of many merry ones.[1]

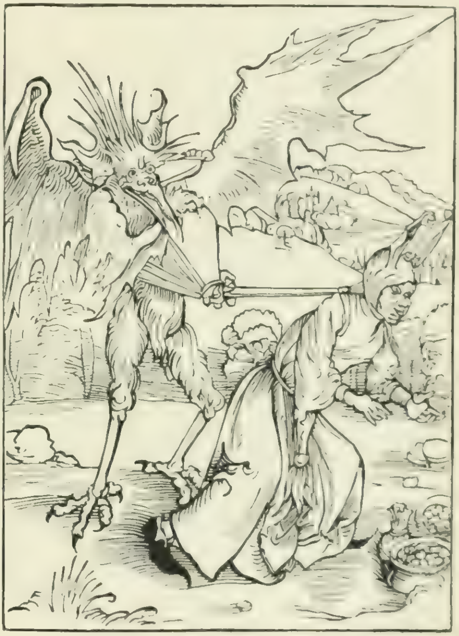

Fig. 67. THE FOOL AND THE DEVIL

From Barclay's *Ship of Fools*

The fool tradition is an important one in many ways. Not only does it pass on to add gaiety to one great comedy of Shakespeare's and profundity to a great tragedy, but it perhaps gives us one other link between the theatre of the Middle Ages and the mimic entertainments of Greece and Rome. The Sots and the Fols of France, together with the Court fool as immortalized in Feste and the Fool in *King Lear*, at first sight seem to be purely the product of medieval times, but when we discover that in Greece a *μωρὸς φαλακρός* (a bald-headed fool) was a well known figure, when we find that in Rome the same type was known as the *mimus calvus* or *stupidus*, we begin to trace a resemblance between the antique figures and their later counterparts. The medieval fool seems to have been often bald-headed. Cries a contemporary:

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[1] In Italy the actors of the *sacre rappresentazioni* were mostly bodies of young men, called *[illegible]*, sometimes the girls of convent schools also occupied themselves in arranging dramatic performances.

> Mez regardez quel apostol!
> il est tondu comme ung fol,[1]

while another speaks of a kind of entertainer who "rasit capillos suos et barbam."[2] The garments of mixed colours seem to have been known in ancient days as well, while the cockscomb, as has lately been shown, was a feature of a type in the classic mime. The fools with their long-eared caps, illustrated in Fig. 67, may be compared with the series of fool-types from Roman times given in Figs. 68, 69, and 70. A whole volume would be required to trace fully the evidence which connects the two, but even these few remarks may serve to call attention to the main points of correspondence.

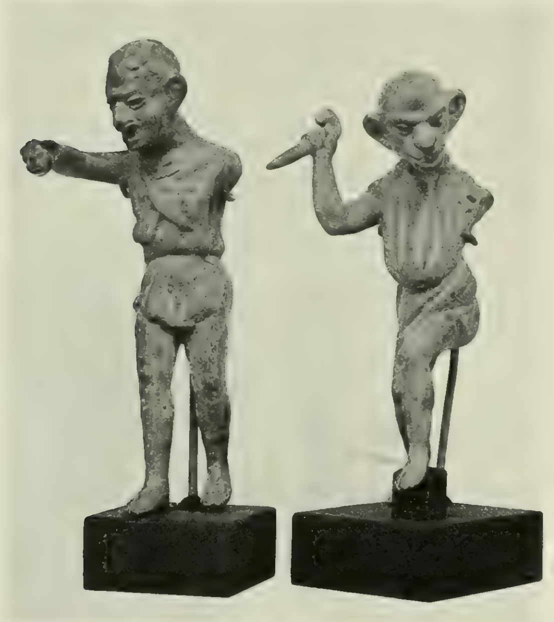

Fig. 68. TERRA-COTTA STATUETTES OF ROMAN MIMES

From the originals in the British Museum.

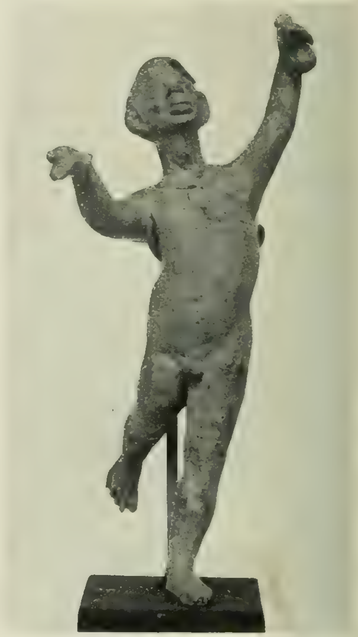

Fig. 69. TERRA-COTTA STATUETTE OF A ROMAN MIME

From the original in the British Museum.

Another aspect of the medieval theatre must also be hurriedly passed over. It has been seen above that the fools formed important acting companies in France, and it may be suggested that the medieval mystery proper is not so innocent of mime influence as has generally been supposed.

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[1] "But look at that apostle!
He is shaved like a fool."

[2] "Shaved his hair and beard."

If we imagine the conditions of life in the Middle Ages; if we think of the wandering vagabonds, the entertainers, with their traditional repertories and their skill in interpretation; and if we contrast with them the wholly inexperienced workmen who set about to perform some great religious cycle—if we think of these things truly, we are almost bound to suppose that the amateurs would call upon the skill of the professional *mimi*, *jongleurs*, and *histriones*. At York payments were made to "ministrallis in festo Corporis Cristi" in 1446, while the following year twopence was given to "ij ludentibus Joly Wat and Malkyn." How far these records from York can be treated as typical we have, of course, no means of knowing, but we may not be wrong in tracing many of the comic features in the mystery plays to the influence, direct or indirect, of the professionals. Once more, then, the medieval drama and the medieval theatre are seen to be the result of two forces—the traditionally preserved relics of Roman mimic displays and the new spirit which sprang independently from the Church and inspired men toward a form of art entirely different in spirit and in aim from anything which had been seen in classic times.

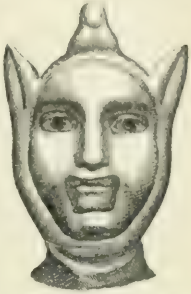
Fig. 70. Terra cotta showing the Mimus Calvus

From Ficoroni, *De Larvis scenicis*, Plate LXXII

In presenting their performances these medieval entertainers, having no newspaper press in which to advertise themselves, made free use of the *cri* or cry. This *cri* was usually accompanied, as in a present-day circus, by a lengthy procession. A full account of *le cry et Proclamation public* made for the exhibition at Paris of *Le Mystère des Actes des Apostres* in 1540 has been preserved, and a similar proclamation for the Chester plays, dated 1544, provides an interesting parallel. The object of both is the same—to announce the plays, present authority, and demand that no disturbance be made.

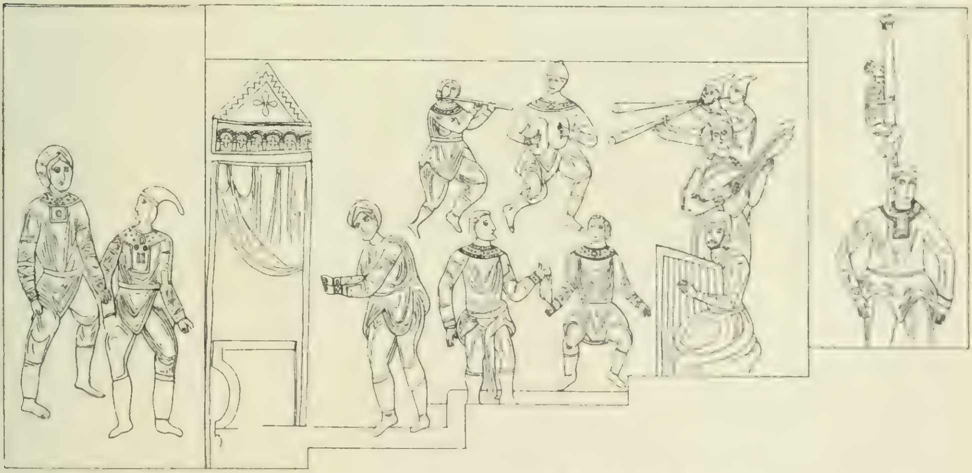
Fig. 71. Eastern Mimi, as shown in a Fresco at St Sophia (Kiev)

Normally in medieval drama all parts were taken by men. This is almost certainly true of England; in France there are at least three records previous to 1550 which inform us of women players. One young amateur actress at Metz in 1468 spoke no fewer than 2300 lines as St Catherine—

winning as her reward the hand of a gentleman in marriage. The general level of performance, no doubt, was crude, but a devout air of seriousness pervaded the whole. This acting business was so obviously not merely a game, but something of real importance for the world. Anachronistic as the drama regularly was in main outline, little details had to be scrupulously exact. There must be the bladder of blood and the sheephooks and the instruments of torture. The effect of Christ's crucifixion could not be complete unless the actor himself suffered. M. le curé, one Nicolle, of Metz took the part of Jesus in 1437, and he " cuyda mourir en l'arbre de la croix, car le cœur lui faillit, tellement qu'il fût été mort, s'il ne fût été secouru." [1] From the same locality we learn that a priest named Jehan de Missey " portoit le personnage de Juda," but " pendit trop longtemps " and " fut pareillement transi et quasi mort; car le cueur lui faillit, par quoi il fut bien hâtivement dépendu et fut emporté en aucun lieu prochain pour le frotter de vinaigre et autre chose pour le réconforter." [2] If the Fouquet miniature is at all a representation of the reality we may truly pity the young performer of St Apollonia. The tooth-drawer is most businesslike and the ropepullers most energetic.

As is evident, in this medieval drama and its theatre we have a set of conditions surprisingly like those provided in Greece. A drama, lyrical in origin, which springs from religion; actors devoted to the presentation of the plays; the whole performance a thing not of a class, but of the community—these are features which the Middle Ages possess in common with Athens of the age of Aeschylus. Beyond these similarities, however, there are many differences. The medieval people lacked that classical feeling for simplicity and unity of effect which characterizes Greek sculpture and Greek thought. The gargoyles will always be peering out from behind the soaring windows and the intricate traceries of stonework. The devils with their squibs will ever be pressing among the actors of more serious *rôles*. The medieval theatre is obviously a thing of the " Gothic imagination." Where the Greeks forbade violent action on the stage the audience of the Middle Ages demanded blood and rant. Herod has to rage on the pageant and on the street also. Where the Greeks endeavoured to secure an harmonious unity of effect, the medieval playwrights huddled serious and comic together. The shepherds crack their rustic jokes ere viewing Christ's manger; Noah and his wife have their comic tussle as the Deluge sweeps over the world. No one can say which is higher—the Greek or the Gothic; each is essentially different, even although with both the theatre took its rise out of chants to a divinity.

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[1] " Would have died on the rood-tree, for he fainted and was like to have died had he not been rescued."

[2] " He took the part of Judas, but hung too long and fainted and was like dead; for his heart failed him, wherefore he was hastily taken down and carried to a place near by and sprinkled with vinegar and other things to bring him round."

CHAPTER IV

THEATRES OF RENASCENCE ITALY

(i) THE CLASSICAL REVIVAL

THE course of our survey of theatrical settings has carried us to the fifteenth and even to the sixteenth century, but it must be remembered that there is no distinct break between medieval period and Renascence period, that mystery plays were being given on the Continent contemporaneously with the more ornate tragedies and operas at the Italian Courts, that the very years which saw the performance of *As You Like It* witnessed also in some provincial town the ranting of Herod on a pageant stage. As early as 1452 Alberti had designed a theatre proper for Pope Nicholas V, and by the end of the fifteenth century at Ferrara and at Rome performances were being given of classical plays by Terence and Plautus.

Fundamentally, the Renascence meant a rebirth of interest in the life and literature of ancient Greece and Rome. Feverishly men studied the long-forgotten pages of Greek manuscripts, unearthed treasures of statuary, embraced pagan legend, wrote poems and plays in imitation of classic authors. In the midst of this almost universal enthusiasm, which was both artistic and scholarly, it was not surprising that some new knowledge of the Greek and Roman stages should come to light. An ancient work by Vitruvius was rediscovered and eagerly read by the young architects. Out of this were born new theories concerning theatres and the stage, theories which were crystallized in Serlio's famous *Architettura* of 1551, which contained views to be expanded later in Sabbatini's volume on the theatre. The new views and theories gave rise to theatres in Italy and France such as the Middle Ages never knew and such as were finally to revolutionize the whole of European stage and dramatic art.

As we have noted, the first that is heard of the revival of classical plays is toward the end of the fifteenth century. Rome, Florence, and Ferrara all witnessed productions of this type. Under Julius Pomponius Laetus (1425–98) the Roman Academy certainly produced some plays of Seneca and a comedy possibly by Plautus. A description of a tragic performance is given by Sulpicius Verulanus in an Epistle to Cardinal Raffaelle Riario.[1] He says:

> Tu enim primus Tragoediae . . . in medio foro pulpitum ad quinque pedum altitudinem erectum pulcherrime exornasti: eamdemque, postquam in Hadriani mole Divo Innocentio spectante est acta, rursus intra tuos penates, tamquam in media Circi cavea, toto concessu umbraculis tecto, admisso populo et pluribus tui ordinis spectatoribus honorifice excepisti. Tu etiam primus picturatae scaenae faciem, quum Pomponiani comoediam agerent, nostro saeculo ostendisti.[2]

This, as is obvious, tells us little, but what little there is is valuable. The audience sat under awnings, there was a stage five feet high and, most important of all, a *picturatae scaenae facies*. About a quarter of a century or more later P. Palliolo undertook to describe *Le Feste pel Conferimento del Patriziato a Giuliano e Lorenzo de' Medici* when some play or other was given. Here,

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[1] In his edition of Vitruvius, c. 1492.

[2] "You first equipped a stage for Tragedy beautifully. This was erected five feet high in the middle of the square. After the play had been acted *in Hadriani mole* [presumably the Castle of St Angelo] before Pope Innocent, you received it again in your own palace. The audience sat under awnings, as in the *cavea* of a Circus. The public was admitted and there were many spectators of your own rank. You, too, when the students of Pomponius acted a comedy, first revealed to our age the appearance of a painted scene."

> guardando avanti, se appresenta la fronte della scena, in v compassi distinta per mezzo di colonne quadre, con basi e capitelli coperti de oro. In ciascuno compasso è uno uscio di grandezza conveniente a private case. . . . La parte inferiore di questa fronte di quattro frigi è ornata. . . . A gli usci delle scene furono poste portiere di panno de oro. El proscenio fu coperto tutto di tapeti con uno ornatissimo altare in mezzo.[1]

In this instance something more is given to us. There is here a proscenium, and, behind it, a back wall presenting four columns which divided the set into five compartments, each compartment being hung with cloth of gold. So much for Rome.

At Ferrara, under Ercole d'Este, duke of that city, dramatic performances of a similar kind were given with as great enthusiasm. Once more we may turn to the records of these shows. By 1471 a play of some nature had been given there, and then in 1486 comes a revival of the *Menaechmi* of Plautus. A contemporary account of the revival has been preserved, in which we are informed that

> in lo suo cortile . . . fu fato suso uno tribunale di legname, con case v merlade, con una finestra e uscio per ciascuna : poi venne una fusta . . . e traversò il cortile con dieci persone dentro con remi e vela, del naturale.[2]

Magnificence and experimentation were developing rapidly. This performance was followed by the *Amphitruo* in 1487 when appeared "uno paradiso cum stelle et altre rode,"[3] and the *Menaechmi* was revived again in 1491, with scenery painted by Niccolò del Cogo, showing a "prospecto de quattro castelli."[4] Still later, in 1499, three Roman comedies were presented with "cinque casamenti merlati" executed by the artists Fino and Bernardino Marsigli. For these and for plays given in 1502 the stages were between four and five feet high.

At other cities similar scenes were devised. At Bologna, according to a letter dated July 16, 1496, from Floriano Dulfo to the Duke of Mantua, a farce was presented in which was a

> coperto azuro stellato che nè pictore nè sculptore, nè ingegno humano saperebe nè pensare nè fare il più bello.[5]

These descriptions of the performances at Rome, at Ferrara, and at Bologna require careful consideration, for here we have the basis of the Renascence and of the modern stage. First of all, let us see whether there is any pictorial representation which may assist us. This pictorial representation is to be found, as has been divined, in the edition of Terence issued at Lyons under the direction of Jodocus Badius Ascensius in 1493, and in the Venice Terence of 1497. In the former each play is adorned with a series of woodcuts showing various episodes in the plot. At first sight these might be imagined to be merely the fictitious interpretations of an artist, but a more careful study reveals the fact that they must have been taken directly from actual productions of the plays. The chief indication of this fact lies in the grouping of the woodcuts themselves. A reference to Fig. 72 will show that throughout the particular comedy there illustrated the setting is constant. This setting consists of a back wall composed of five simple columns supporting four round arches, the spaces between the columns being closed by curtains, which can be drawn as is shown in the second woodcut in Fig. 72, and behind which are tiny rooms with rear windows (first woodcut in Fig. 72). Each compartment denotes a separate locality, or, to be more exact, denotes the house (*domus* or *mansion*) of one of the characters in the play—Carini, Chreme(tis), Chrisidis, and Do(mus) Symonis being written below the four arches. The back wall, or proscenium, is flanked by two statuettes, symbolizing Phoebus and Liber, while the whole stands on a plain platform stage supported by trestles.

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[1] "Looking in front we see the scene-front, divided into five compartments by means of four columns, with bases and capitals of gold. In each compartment is a doorway of a size similar to that of doors in private houses. . . . The lower part of the scene-front is decorated with four friezes. . . . At the doors of the scenes were placed curtains of gold cloth. The proscenium was all covered with tapestries and had a heavily decorated altar in the centre."

[2] "In his courtyard . . . was erected a wooden stage with five battlemented houses. There was a window and a door in each. Then a ship came in . . . and crossed the courtyard. It had ten persons in it and was fitted with oars and a sail in a most realistic manner."

[3] "A paradise with stars and other devices [literally, wheels]."

[4] "A prospect of four castles."

[5] "An azure starry covering such as no painter, sculptor, or human genius could imagine or excel."

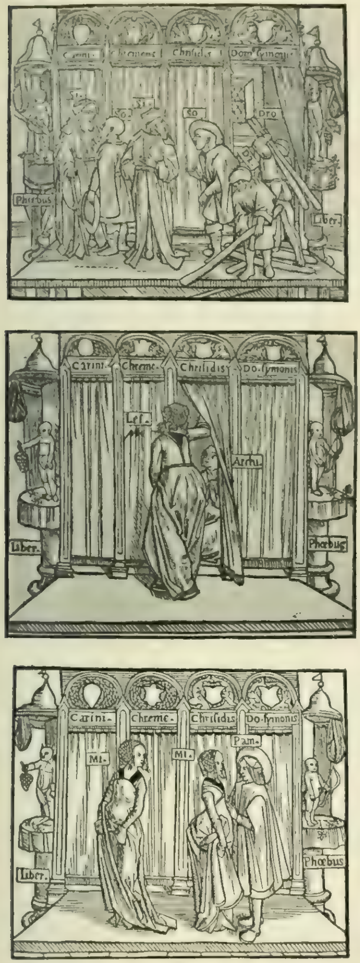

Fig. 72. THREE THEATRE SETTINGS FOR THE "ANDRIA" OF TERENCE

From the Lyons Terence (1493).

When we turn from these woodcuts of *Andria* to those illustrating the other plays, we note that, while the general principle of the setting is maintained, the actual arrangements differ. It is this fact that leads us to assume the genuinely theatrical origin of the whole series, for while the illustrations vary from comedy to comedy they are constant within the limits of each play of the series. Thus for *Heautontimoroumenos* the four curtained compartments are arranged, not in a straight wall, but as a three-sided figure jutting out on to the stage and supported by formal columns without the flanking statuettes (Fig. 73). For the *Adelphoe* there are five compartments arranged somewhat as in the *Heautontimoroumenos* (Fig. 75, which again shows the interior of one of the sections), while for *Hecyra* the four compartments are arranged as a kind of box toward the right-hand corner of the stage (Fig. 76). Besides these particular settings for the individual plays the Lyons Terence furnishes us with a picture of a *Theatrum* which helps us toward gaining a more comprehensive idea of the type of early Italian experimentation in this direction (Fig. 74), and this might be compared with the "Coliseus sive Theatrum" depicted in the Venice Terence of 1497.

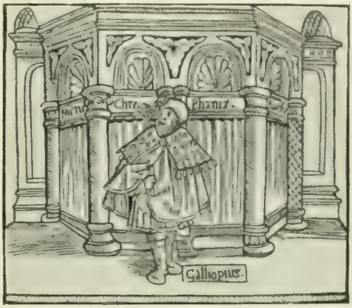

Fig. 73. THEATRE SETTING FOR THE "HEAUTONTIMOROUMENOS" OF TERENCE

From the Lyons Terence (1493)

What are we to make of all these? Are they relics of medieval styles or else something new? The problem has been bandied to and fro for some considerable time; but, from the simplicity of the Terence designs, which accord with the descriptions given of the plays at Rome, it would seem that we are dealing here with a classicism not unlike that of our early writers of tragi-comedies. It was a classicism with much of medieval sentiment in it. We must remember that through the *sacre rappresentazioni* of Italy these humanists must have been acquainted with theatrical performances. Of the Greek stage they knew nothing till about 1484, and they must inevitably have taken over many of the features of the medieval play in their new efforts. No doubt the conventional *case* or houses were the chief of these, and we see in the woodcuts the classical interpretation of medieval practice.

(ii) VITRUVIUS

It has been said that up to 1484 men in general knew nothing of the Greek stage. Perhaps it may be well to consider what they actually did learn when the first Vitruvius was issued. A good deal they read about the proportions and structure of Greek and Roman auditoria, but this is almost all they could find concerning the stage and the *mise-en-scène* :

> Ipsae autem scaenae suas habent rationes explicitas ita, uti mediae valvae ornatus habeant aulae regiae, dextra ac sinistra hospitalia, secundum autem spatia ad ornatus comparata, quae loca Graeci περιάκτους dicunt ab eo, quod machinae sunt in his locis versatiles trigonoe habentes singulares species ornationis, quae, cum aut fabularum mutationes sunt futurae seu deorum adventus, cum tonitribus repentinis, [ea] versentur mutentque speciem ornationis in fronte. Secundum ea loca versurae sunt procurrentes, quae efficiunt una a foro, altera a peregre, aditus in scaenam. Genera autem sunt scaenarum tria: unum quod dicitur tragicum, alterum comicum, tertium satyricum. Horum autem ornatus sunt inter se dissimili disparique ratione, quod tragicae deformantur columnis et fastigiis et signis reliquisque regalibus rebus; comicae autem aedificiorum privatorum et maenianorum habent speciem prospectusque fenestris dispositos imitatione, communium aedificiorum rationibus; satyricae vero ornantur arboribus, speluncis, montibus reliquisque agrestibus rebus in topeodis [? topiarii] speciem deformatis.[1]

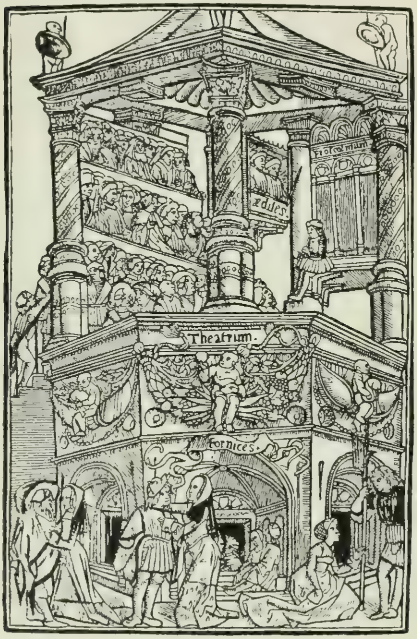

Fig. 74. A RENASCENCE THEATRE
From the Lyons Terence (1493).

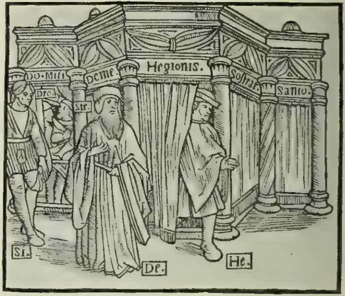

Fig. 75. THEATRE SETTING FOR THE "ADELPHOE" OF TERENCE
From the Lyons Terence (1493).

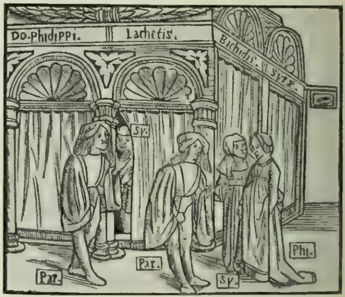

Fig. 76. THEATRE SETTING FOR THE "HECYRA" OF TERENCE
From the Lyons Terence (1493).

Now, we may ask, what was a humanist toward the end of the fifteenth century likely to seize upon first in Vitruvius? Unquestionably he would take first the arrangement of the auditorium or *cavea*, but perhaps he would not at once realize that the theatres were open-air structures. He would only note the semicircular arrangement of the seats. Thus in the 1513 Florence edition of Vitruvius illustrations for the first time accompanied the Latin text and both for the Greek and the Roman theatre the artist showed a rectangular building with a semicircular auditorium faced by a fanciful scene-building (Fig. 77). The contemporary humanist is not quite sure what *valvae mediae* and *hospitalia* are; he has seen the popular *sacre rappresentazioni*; and he combines both into one. His *case* are relics of the medieval *mansions*, made now with curtains only, now more firmly with windows and doors.

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[1] "The scenes themselves are arranged in such a manner that they have middle doors decorated like those of a royal palace, to right and left the *hospitalia* [? guest chambers], and beyond spaces provided for decoration which the Greeks call περίακτοι because in these places are triangular machines which turn, each having a particular kind of ornamentation, and which, either when an alteration is to be made in the play or when gods with sudden thunderclaps come upon the stage, are revolved and change the appearance of the decoration in front. Beyond these places are projecting wings which afford entrances, one from the forum, the other from abroad. There are three kinds of scenes, one called tragic, another comic, and a third satyric. Their decorations are different and unlike each other, for the tragic scenes are shown with columns, pediments, statues, and other royal appurtenances; the comic scenes show private houses with views of windows after the manner of ordinary dwellings; the satyric scenes are decorated with trees, caves, mountains, and other rustic objects delineated in landscape style."

While the humanist is doing this, however, he puzzles over the various points in Vitruvius. A most interesting illustration of this questioning appears in a sketch by Antonio San Gallo il Giovane (1485–1546), lately reproduced in *The Mask*. This shows a plan, a front view of a stage, and an explanatory detail. The manuscript text is difficult to read, but seems to run as follows:

> Aula rezio e li ospitalia si facivevano in sul proscenio quello che noi diciamo el parete e fingieva si una sala e da ogni canto uno ospitio overo Camera donde uscivano li recitanti aveva cosa . posti tre perche secondo la materia si facieva varii adornamente come dicie di tre sorte.[1]

Below this is the plan, showing a curved *teatro* (the Greek *θέατρον*, signifying the auditorium), the *orchestra del teatro*, behind the *aula regia*, and at the rear the *foro* or forum. At the sides are two *machine* or machines *per ogni ascione* (for every action or scene). The front view shows the artist's idea of how these machines were worked. The *aula regia* is evidently composed of buildings to the foreground, and the space to the back is the *foro*. The sides of the stage are formed each by an *ospitio overo hospitalia* (ospitio or hospitalia) with a square space in which the triangular machine is placed. Undoubtedly this design marks a groping toward the truth regarding the theatres of classic days. The interest for us is not that it aids in an understanding of these classic theatres, but that it helps toward an understanding of the theatres of Renascence Italy.

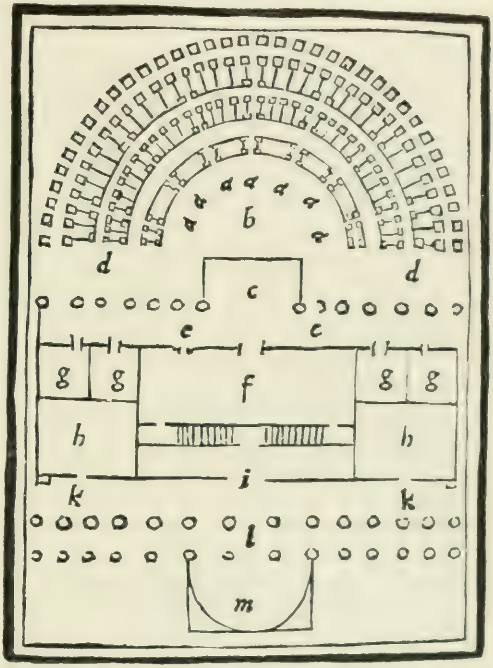

Fig. 77. Plan of a Greek Theatre in the Jocundus Edition of Vitruvius, 1513

This shows well the early humanist idea of the Greek stage. Note that the whole is enclosed within a rectangular wall.

(iii) Perspective in Scenes

Meanwhile, the study of the art and science of perspective had been occupying the minds of many men during the fifteenth century. From the time of Brunelleschi to that of Leonardo da

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[1] "*Aula regia* and the *hospitalia* were made on the proscenium which we call the 'wall' and a hall was simulated [in them], and at each side an *ospitio* or room whence the actors came forth. This had three stations, so that according to the subject-matter various decorations were given, as I said, of three kinds." *The Mask*, XI, iv, October 1925. Two readings in the text were suggested to me by Mr. Hugh [illegible]

Vinci men were striving to learn how most realistically they might present the forms of nature as seen through their eyes. It is not surprising, therefore, that this new art of perspective should have been brought into the early Renascence theatres. The first definite record of the use of this perspective comes with the performance of Ariosto's *Cassaria* at Ferrara in 1508. The scene of Mytilene in this production, contrived by Pellegrino da Udine, presented to the audience "una contracta et prospettiva di una terra cum case, chiesie, campanili et zardini."[1]

The full account of the Mantuan performances of February 1501, provided by Sigismondo Cantelino, seems to indicate, however, that even before this date artists had been devoting themselves to the problems of practical perspective :

> Era la sua forma quadrangula, protensa alquanto in longitudine : li doi lati l'uno al altro de rimpecto, havevano per ciaschuno octo architravi con colonne ben conrespondenti et proportionate alla larghezza et alteza de dicti archi : le basi et capitelli pomposissimamente . . . representavano alla mente un edificio eterno et antiquo, pieno di delectatione ; li archi con relevo di fiori rendevano prospectiva mirabile ; la largheza di ciascheuno era braza quactro vel cerca ; la alteza proporzionata ad quella. Dentro nel prospecto eran panni d' oro et alcune verdure, si come li recitationi recerchavano ; una delle bande era ornata delli sei quadri del Cesareo Triumpho per man del singulare Mantengha : li doi altri lati discontro erano con simili archi, ma de numero inferiore, che ciascheuno ne haveva sei. Doi bande era scena data ad actorj et recitatorj : le doe altre erano ad scalini, deputati per le donne et daltro, per . . . trombecti et musici. [Between the columns] era una grocta, benchè facta ad arte tamen naturalissima : sopra quella era un ciel grande fulgentissimo de varij lumi, in modo de lucidissime stelle, con una artificiata rota de segni al moto de' quali girava mo il sole, mo la luna nelle case proprie : dentro era la rota de fortuna con sei tempi : *regno*, *regnaj*, *regnabo* : in mezo residea la dea aurea con un sceptro con un delphin. Dintorno alla scena al frontespitio da basso era li triumphi del Petrarcha, ancor loro penti per man del p Mantengha ; sopra eran candelieri vistosissimi deaurati tucti : nel mezo era uno scudo colle arme per tucto della C^a^ M^a^ ; sopra la aquila aurea bicapitata col regno et diadema imperiale : ciascheuno teneva tre doppieri : ad ogni lato era le insegne.[2]

At Urbino in 1513 an artist painted similar scenes for Bibbiena's *Calandra*, when

> La scena . . . era finta una città bellissima con le strade, palazzi, chiese, torri, strade vere, e ogni cosa di rilevo, ma ajutata ancora da bonissima pintura e prospettiva bene intesa.[3]

These descriptions of early sixteenth-century productions could, of course, be continued almost indefinitely. Perhaps it may be well now to turn to critical precept again, especially as that critical precept is so practical as that contained in the *Architettura* (1551) of Sebastiano Serlio. Serlio was typical of his age. Deeply imbued with the prevalent classicism of his time, he strove to find out the true secrets of the Roman theatre, while at the same time he tried to carry forward ideas he had gained from Rome so as to make them applicable to his own time. His section on scenery therefore has a practical as well as an antiquarian interest. Starting with the description of a theatre, he plans a semicircular auditorium and a stage of a novel plan. In front is a flat platform and behind a stage raked heavily for the better setting of the scenes (Fig. 78). Next, following Vitruvius, he divides his *mise-en-scène* into three types, corresponding to Comedy, Tragedy, and Satyric plays. Designs for each of these are given in his book (Figs. 79, 80, and 81). The Comedy scene has ordinary houses, with in the foreground the house of a courtesan; Tragedy is provided with lofty palaces; the Satyric drama has rustic objects, trees, groves, and cottages. These various stock settings were to be secured by a judicious intermixture of built-up *case* and painted cloths. At the rear of the raked stage was the back-cloth, painted in perspective and perhaps the houses nearest to it might also be painted on the flat. Those next the spectator, however, had to have two sides at least so that they should give the impression of solidity, the whole presenting a perspective background for the players who performed not *in* the scene but *against* it, the action proceeding on the flat stage in front. These settings, particularly the tragic and the comic, had an almost incalculable influence upon later scenic endeavour. They were copied, as we shall find, by Inigo Jones in England (Fig. 150); in Italy they had a widely popular career (Figs. 82–84); in France they passed over to the seventeenth century, exercising an influence even in the time of Racine. Again and again we find the palaces and the court-yards and the churches of Serlio facing us in later tragedy and comedy.

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[1] "A painting or perspective of a landscape with houses, churches, towers, and gardens."

[2] D'Ancona, ii, 381 : "The shape was rectangular, longer than it was wide : the two sides opposite one another had each eight architraves with columns harmonizing with and proportioned to the breadth and height of the said arches : the bases and capitals were most imposing, the whole giving the impression of a permanent antique building, full of beauty ; the arches with flowers in relief formed a wonderful perspective ; the width of each was about six feet ; the height proportionate. Within the scene were cloths of gold and some shrubs, as the scenes required ; one of the sides was decorated with six pictures of the royal triumph from the hand of the famous Mantegna : the two other sides had similar arches, but fewer in number, each having six in all. Two sides formed the 'scene' devoted to the actors and performers ; the other two had staircases, apportioned for the ladies and also for the . . . trumpeters and musicians. [Between the columns] was a grotto, although artificial most realistic : above that was a great sky shining with varied lights like clear stars, with an artificial wheel of signs at the movement of which turned now the sun, now the moon, in their proper places : within was a wheel of Fortune with six [? three] states : *regno*, *regnaj*, *regnabo* : in the midst stood the golden goddess with a sceptre and a dolphin. Within the scene at the foot of the frontispiece appeared Petrarch's Triumphs, painted also by the hand of Mantegna ; above were most lovely candelabra covered with gold : in the midst was a shield with the arms of His Imperial Majesty ; above the two-headed golden eagle with the imperial crown and diadem : each held three torches ; and these arms were at each side."

[3] "The scene was made to resemble a very lovely city with streets, palaces, churches, towers, real streets, and everything in relief, but assisted by beautiful painting and clever perspective."

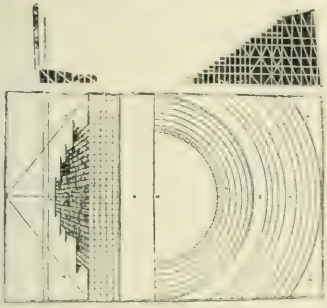

Fig. 78. PLAN OF A THEATRE BY SERLIO

Note should be taken of the rectangular outside walls, and of the two parts of the stage, one level and the other raked.

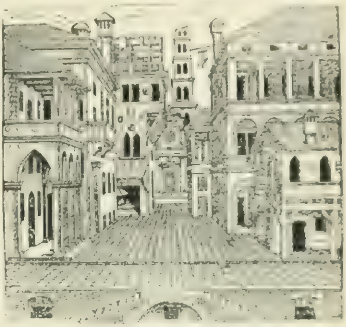

Fig. 79. THE COMIC SCENE ACCORDING TO SERLIO

Note the steps leading from the stage to the 'orchestra' level.

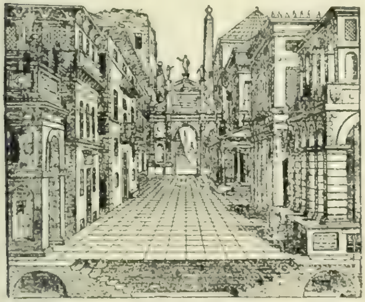

Fig. 80. THE TRAGIC SCENE ACCORDING TO SERLIO

From the English edition of *Architettura* (1611).

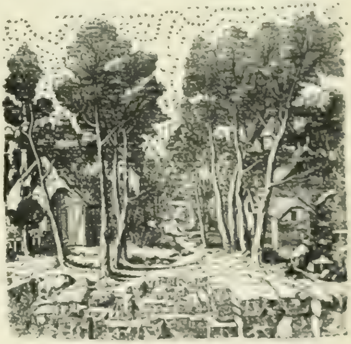

Fig. 81. THE SATYRIC SCENE ACCORDING TO SERLIO

It is evident that in the Serlian designs use is made of the old medieval multiple setting, although that multiple setting is classicized; and that there is preserved still the ancient *platea* or open stage in front, all the action proceeding out of doors. Some may describe this as classical; others as medieval; the real truth seems to be that here the medieval multiple setting (the *décor simultané*) and the classical imitation have met. It is needless here to comment on the many peculiar conventions to which this exterior setting of plays gave rise. These are obvious, but attention may be drawn to the very marked influence which this setting had upon all drama of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Even Goldoni in the middle of the latter century was the thrall of this tradition. The scene of *La Bottega del Caffè* (1750) is thus

> una piazzetta in Venezia, ovvero una strada alquanto spaziosa con tre Botteghe: quella di mezzo ad uso di Caffè; quella alla diritta di Parrucchiere, e Barbiere; quella alla sinistra ad uso di Giuoco, o sia Biscazza; e sopra le tre Botteghe suddette si vedono alcuni Stanzini praticabili appartenenti alla Bisca colle finestre in veduta della strada medesima. Dalla parte del Barbiere (con una strada in mezzo) evvi la Casa della Ballerina, e dalla parte della Bisca vedesi la Locanda con porte e finestre praticabili.[1]

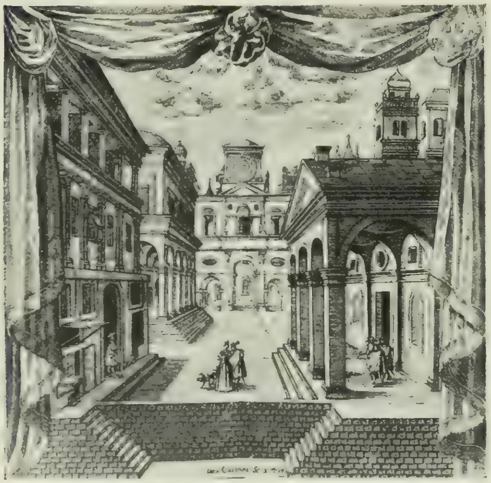

Fig. 82. AN ITALIAN SETTING OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

From J. Furtenbach, *Architectura Civilis* (Ulm, 1628).

(iv) THE TEATRO OLIMPICO

Serlio's settings, as we have seen, were temporary erections of lath and canvas, in so far departing from the conventions of the Roman theatre, but there were others who wished to introduce into the modern world, not such flimsy settings, but a permanent *frons scaenae* such as once the theatre at Orange had possessed. New knowledge of the classical stage was being obtained, and this was expressed in visible form by Andrea Palladio in the Teatro Olimpico at Vicenza. This theatre, taking its rise from the Olympic Academy of that town, was begun, it is said, on May 23, 1580, but, Palladio dying on August 19 of that year, the work was entrusted to Vincenzo Scamozzi, who completed it in 1584. The theatre is constructed according to the best classical ideas of the time, although several interesting innovations have been introduced. First, in the ground plan (Fig. 85) we note that the auditorium is arranged as a semi-ellipse, not as a semicircle, the reason being that the former construction provides better sight for the spectators. In general, however, the classical plan is followed, with an orchestra between the front of the stage and the lowest row of seats. The stage proper, or *pulpitum*, is rectangular, long and narrow as in Roman theatres, with a wooden floor painted in the semblance of marble. Behind this is the proscenium, an ornamented architectural façade designed on lines similar to those adopted for the theatre at Orange. Below is a series of four pediments (Fig. 86) with statues, and above a series of six statues surmounted by six decorative panels and a painted roof. Facing the audience is a large open arch, the *porta regia* of Vitruvius, flanked on each side by two lesser doors (*portae minores*). The sides of the stage (*versurae*) are enclosed by walls set at right angles to the proscenium proper and also pierced by doors which have above them boxes, apparently intended both for the action of the play and for spectators. In the original

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[1] "A small square in Venice, or a fairly broad street with three booths: that in the middle is the Café; that to the right the Barber's; that to the left the Gaming House; and above the three booths are seen some practicable balconies belonging to the Gaming House with windows in view of the street. On the Barber's side (with a street in the middle) is the Ballerina's house, and on the Gaming House side there stands the Inn with practicable doors and windows."

Teatro Olimpico as finished in 1584 the archways seem to have been closed either by doors or by back-cloths, but, probably through the influence of Daniello Barbaro's interpretation of Vitruvius (Fig. 87) where the *periaktoi* are placed immediately behind the main doorways, Scamozzi had the idea of making perspective alleys at each of his arches. These are placed at such angles that every person in the audience may see down one at least. The perspectives are permanent, and are supposed to represent streets running into the courtyard which is the stage. As is evident, this arrangement was specially suitable for those Renascence plays where two characters, entering upon the stage simultaneously, but from different points, fail to see or hear one another.

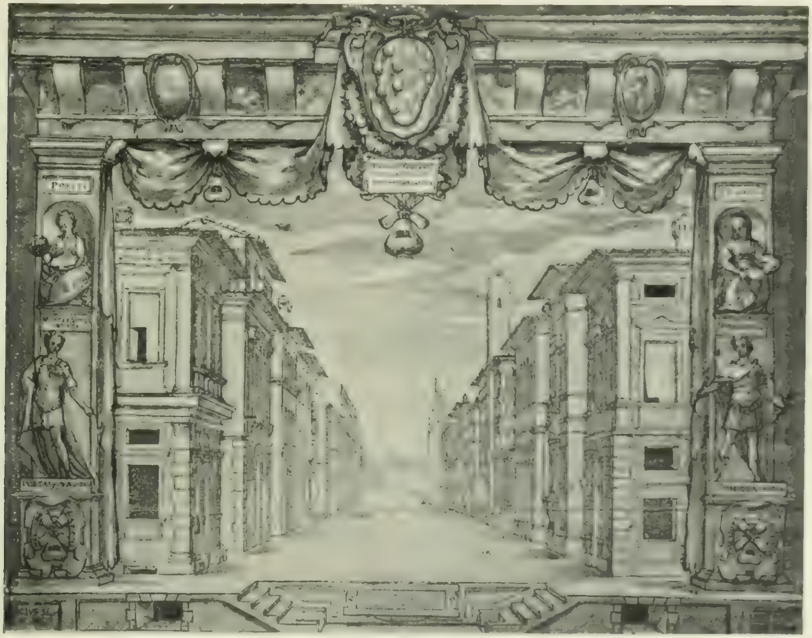

Fig. 83. Design for a Tragic Scene by Jerome Bols

This should be compared with Serlio's tragic scene. Particular note should also be made of the formal proscenium arch.

From the original in the Victoria and Albert Museum

The Teatro Olimpico is one of the great landmarks in the history of the European theatre. To it architects of France and of England, including Inigo Jones himself, came for inspiration.

(v) The Teatro Farnese at Parma

So far we have found, besides the early efforts of Rome and of Ferrara, two main types of theatrical setting: (1) the rectangular stage as planned by Serlio with canvas 'houses' and back-cloths; and (2) the permanent architectural façade of the Teatro Olimpico. While, as we shall see, various improvements and modifications were being made all through the sixteenth century, the main classical influence held its ground. Serlio and Scamozzi remain the maſters of many a theatre worker, and countless designs and suggeſtions ultimately take their rise from the theatre-plans of the one or of the other. The development of the proscenium arch itself is simply a modification or rather a harmonizing of their efforts. It is clear that the Serlian setting provides for one general background, without, however, any masking frame; it is equally clear that in the Teatro Olimpico we have one large opening for a background and four lesser openings. Imitators of the latter theatre might easily lessen the extent of the architectural façade and so increase the scenic space by (1) widening the central doorway or (2) widening all the three doorways facing the audience until merely a thin column separated one from another. In newer designs of this type there was but a ſtep before a proscenium arch was reached. In other words, the open setting as figured by Serlio might come to occupy the entire width of the ſtage, and the whole be placed within a framework (our proscenium arch) which was nothing but the attenuated façade of the original Olympic Theatre.

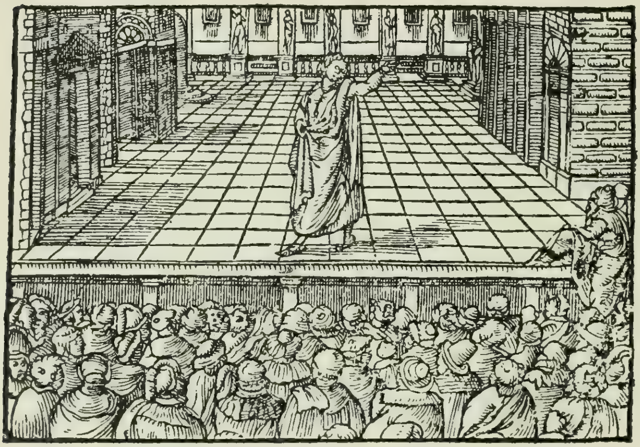

Fig. 84. An Italian Setting of the Sixteenth Century

From Girolamo Parabosco, *Il Pellegrino* (Venice, 1552). Serlio's influence is clear in this woodcut.

This ſtage of development is marked in the Teatro Farnese at Parma, completed in 1618 or in 1619, a playhouse which is hiſtorically intereſting for more than its ſtage alone (see Fig. 160). Up to this time the auditorium seats had been arranged either semicircularly or in the form of a semi-ellipse. Undoubtedly men had been thinking of the problems presented to an architect in a playhouse auditorium, but one of the very firſt movements forward is marked in the seating arrangements of the Teatro Farnese. There the semicircular formation is confined to that portion of the theatre which is set fartheſt from the ſtage, and the seats are continued at right angles to the diameter of the semicircle until they meet the front portion of the ſtage itself. While this is neither the beſt possible arrangement for a theatrical auditorium nor by any means the laſt word said on this subject, it serves to mark a definite period in playhouse architecture.

Moſt important of all, however, is the ſtage arrangement of the Teatro Farnese. Here, as in the earlier Olympic Theatre, a long, narrow platform faces the audience, but, inſtead of the heavily sculptured façade in the rear, there is the earliest of the modern proscenium arches. Behind lies the depth of the ſtage, designed originally to contain tragic, or comic, or satyric settings planned according to the ideas of Serlio, but soon used for other purposes. Within a few years of the erection of the Teatro Farnese it was realized that the masking frame gave an opportunity for the changing of scenes which was denied to Serlio's open ſtage. Truly the implications of the Parma Theatre were enormous. Here a third type of Renascence playhouse had been eſtablished, a type deſtined later to influence the whole of European theatre-craft, being imitated, not only in Italy and in France, but in every Weſtern land.

(vi) CHANGING SCENERY

It has been seen that in the Teatro Farnese opportunity was given to the theatre artist to change his settings during the course of a play. This was impossible in the permanent Teatro Olimpico, and rendered difficult in the Serlian type of stage. Already the Renascence humanists had been speculating and experimenting with *periaktoi*, but Vitruvius had suggested to them a further method of changing the *frons scaenae*. Philander in France had engaged on a commentary upon the work of Vitruvius and published his results in 1544. After describing the *scaena versilis* (or *periaktoi*) by the turning of which another scene was presented Philander notes the *scaena*

> ductilis, quum tractis tabulatis hac atque illac species picturae nudaretur interior.[1]

This note on the *scaena ductilis* was destined to bear much fruit. It set men thinking and experimenting. By 1638 the experimenting was partly over, as we find in a study of Nicola Sabbatini's *Pratica di fabricar Scene e Machine ne' Teatri* (Ravenna, 1638). Deeming change of scene necessary, if not for plays, at least for *intermedii*,[2] he proceeds to describe how these changes can be secured. Adopting fundamentally the Serlian setting, Sabbatini points out that in any changes of scene the front houses must remain untouched. Apparently he does not take fully into account the innovation introduced at the Teatro Farnese, although he does recommend what is virtually a proscenium arch. Three methods he is aware of for the shifting of the scenery. One of these is the well-known use of the *periaktoi*. Frames are made in the form of an isosceles triangle (Fig. 90) and painted with different scenes on each side. The triangle, set on a central pivot, can then be made to turn by having a rope wound round the central support and carried to a winch under the stage. Besides this there is a second device whereby "houses" are constructed of two sides as in Serlio; duplicates of these are made and painted differently. The duplicates are then concealed behind the houses shown to the audience and, when a change of scene is required, are rapidly slipped in front of the others. A third device consists of the preparation of variously painted canvases which are detachable from the lath frames made to carry them. Besides this, directions are given as to the way in which the back-scene might be altered. This, it would seem, was to be made in two parts, so that the halves could be drawn away or pushed forward as desired. Following upon these general directions, Sabbatini provides information as to the means by which special effects could be produced. The *periaktoi*, if soaked in aqua-vitae, lighted and rapidly

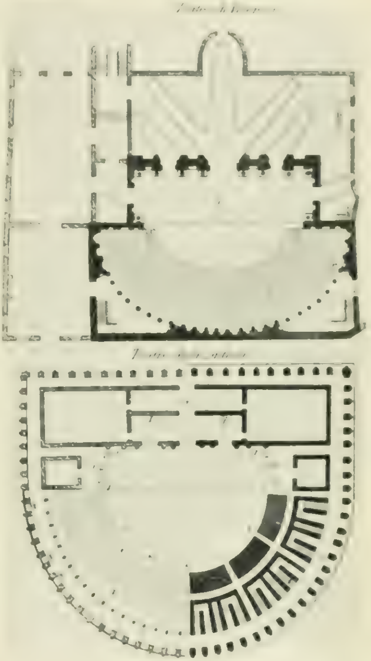

Fig. 85. PLAN OF THE TEATRO OLIMPICO, VICENZA, COMPARED WITH THAT OF A ROMAN THEATRE

Note the avenues for street scenes and the five entrances to the stage.

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[1] "*Scaena ductilis*, by which, through panels drawn to the side, this or that scene is revealed within."

[2] Entertainments of an allegorical kind introduced at the conclusions of the acts of Italian plays.

turned, might give the appearance of a conflagration—although, as the writer realizes, the device at beſt is fraught with considerable danger. So too houses could be made to fall in ruins by conſtructing the frames on connecting iron bars which, when pulled away, would remove the necessary support. Seas could be made by painted cloths underneath which rollers could turn, and perhaps creſt-like ſtrips of wood might be made to rise and fall between the billows. Transformation scenes, by the aid of trap-doors, could easily be arranged, a piece of scenery being suddenly raised to conceal an object on the ſtage, causing it to disappear and change into something else.

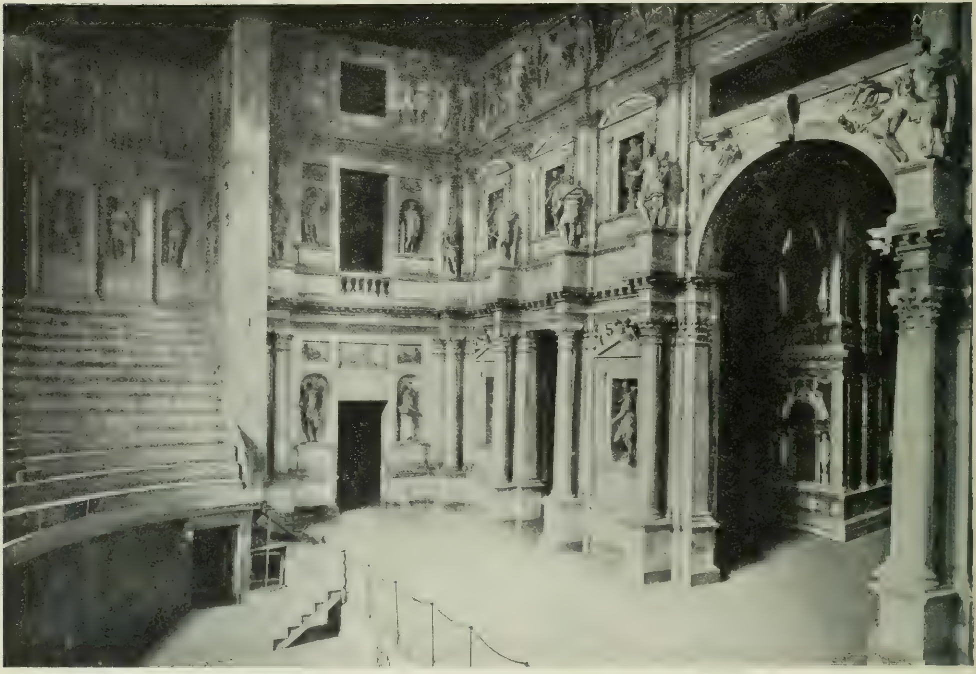

Fig. 86. THE TEATRO OLIMPICO

Photo Alinari.

Quite obviously scenic artiſtry had passed far beyond the Serlian ſtage. It is said that movable scenes had been introduced firſt in the opera-house called the Teatro di San Cassiano at Venice, while, a few years later, at the Teatro di SS. Giovanni e Paolo (built 1639), Giacomo Torelli da Fano "inventò il moversi delle scene coll' arzano." [1]

Scenic effects of a kind never dreamt of before were now freely used. Here, for example, is an account of the Teatro Mediceo conſtructed by Bernardo Buontalenti and of shows given there. The writer is Filippo Baldinucci (1624–96), and the passage, though long, is deeply inſtructive, for it is typical of Renascence ſtage endeavour. Buontalenti, we are told,

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[1] "Invented a means of moving scenes by a winch."

fece[1] . . . il gran teatro per le commedie . . . di larghezza di braccia 35, di lunghezza 95 e braccia 24 d' altezza, e volle che il pavimento del medesimo due braccia e un ottavo pendesse dal capo al piede, a fine che gli spettatori dalla parte dinanzi a quegli di dietro la veduta degli spettacoli non impedissero; fece poi le prospettive e macchine. . . . Queste medesime macchine furono d'esemplare, dal quale poi dagli ingegneri di tutta Europa furon presi i modi e gli artifizj più novi e più singolari. . . . [At a performance real birds were let loose in the auditorium of a theatre and] tirata che fu la gran tela, apparve la nobilissima prospettiva, dove da più parti ed in diversi punti vedeansi rappresentare le più belle vedute e più singolari fabbriche e piazze della nostra città. . . . Nel primo intermedio apparve una nuvola di così squisito artifizio, che non si vidde mai, nè prima nè poi, cosa simile; conciossiacosachè aprendosi, per dar luogo allo scendere di gran copia di persone, che rappresentavano tutti i Beni del mondo mandati da Giove ad arricchir quel giorno, appoco appoco fu veduta svanire, come disfatta del vento, senza che mai si potesse da chi si fosse osservare che le sue parti andassero in luogo alcuno. Nel secondo intermedio furon fatti vedere tutti i Mali del mondo . . . s'aperse un' orrida caverna piena d'orribilissimi fuochi, con fiamme oscure e fosche; dalla gran caverna scappò fuori la città di Dite affummicata ed ardente . . . eranvi alcune alte torri tutte ardenti, in cima alle quali vedeansi orribil Furie crinite di serpenti, ed in abito sanguinolente. . . . Nel terzo intermedio la scena rappresentò campagna spogliata di frondi, come di crudo inverno; vedeansi letti di fiumi e torrenti del tutto asciutti e secchi, quando in un subito dalla parte di ponente fu veduto uscire d'una sotterranea spelonca Zeffiro, che tenendo per mano la bella Flora, diede con essa principio al dolcissimo cantare; al suon del quale comparve la Primavera, con altre festevoli deità, amoretti, aure, ninfe e satiri; e mentre tutti insieme sollazzavansi col ballo, vedeansi fiorire gli alberi e riempirsi di foglie. . . . Nel quarto intermedio viddonsi comparire nell' estremità del palco scogli e dirupi asprissimi, da' quali acque pendevano di vive fontane, inghirlandate di bianchi coralli, madreperle, nicchi, chiocciole ed erbe marine e palustri. Fra gli scogli comparve la dea Teti con gran comitiva di tritoni e mostri marini. . . . Rendea vaghezza, e terrore insieme, la vista di gran quantità di navigli, che per lo mare venivano agitati dall'

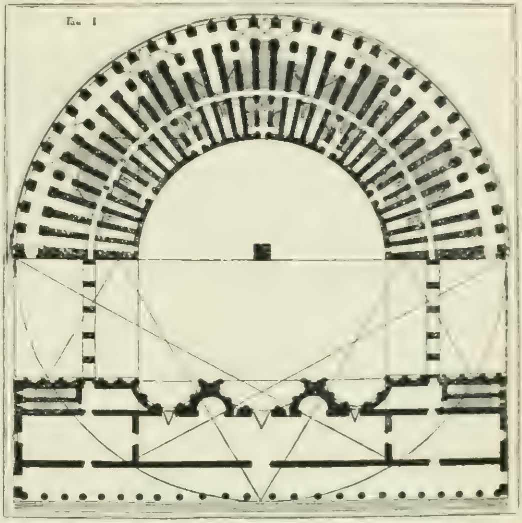

Fig. 87. Plan of a Roman Theatre according to Daniello Barbaro

Note should be made of the *periaktoi* placed at the three doors of entrance.

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[1] "Made . . . the large theatre for comedies . . . 53 feet wide, 143 deep, and 36 high, and contrived that the floor of the theatre should slope 2 yards and an eighth from top to bottom so that the spectators in front should not prevent those at the back from seeing; he made also perspectives and machines. . . . These machines became the model from which the artificers of the whole of Europe took their ideas and newer and more peculiar devices. . . . When the large curtain was drawn there appeared a most beautiful perspective, where in all directions and at divers points were to be seen represented the most lovely views and most peculiar buildings and squares of our city. . . . In the first *intermedio* appeared a cloud of such an exquisite form as had not been seen before or since; this opened to give place for the descent of a great company of figures who represented all the Virtues of the world sent by Jove to enrich that day; little by little it disappeared, as if it had been carried away by the wind, without anyone being able to see how its various portions vanished. In the second *intermedio* all the Evils of the world were shown . . . a horrible cavern full of the most terrible flames and dark vapours appeared; from this huge cavern appeared the City of Dis all in flame and smoke. . . . There were some high towers all in flame, on the top of which could be seen horrible furies with serpent hair, clad in blood red garments. . . . In the third *intermedio* the scene represented a bare landscape as in a severe winter; beds of rivers and torrents, all dry and hard, were to be seen, when suddenly from the west Zephyr was seen to issue forth from a subterranean cave; she held the beautiful Flora by the hand and sang a most sweet song with her; at the sound of this Spring appeared, with other festive deities, loves, winds, nymphs, and satyrs; and while all these together danced in the ballet the trees were seen to flourish again and renew their leaves. . . . In the fourth *intermedio* at the extreme edge of the stage there were seen appearing cliffs and precipitous rocks from which real waterfalls flowed; they were all covered with white coral, mother of pearl, shells, and sea-weeds. The goddess Thetis appeared among the rocks with a great company of tritons and sea-monsters. . . . The sight of a great

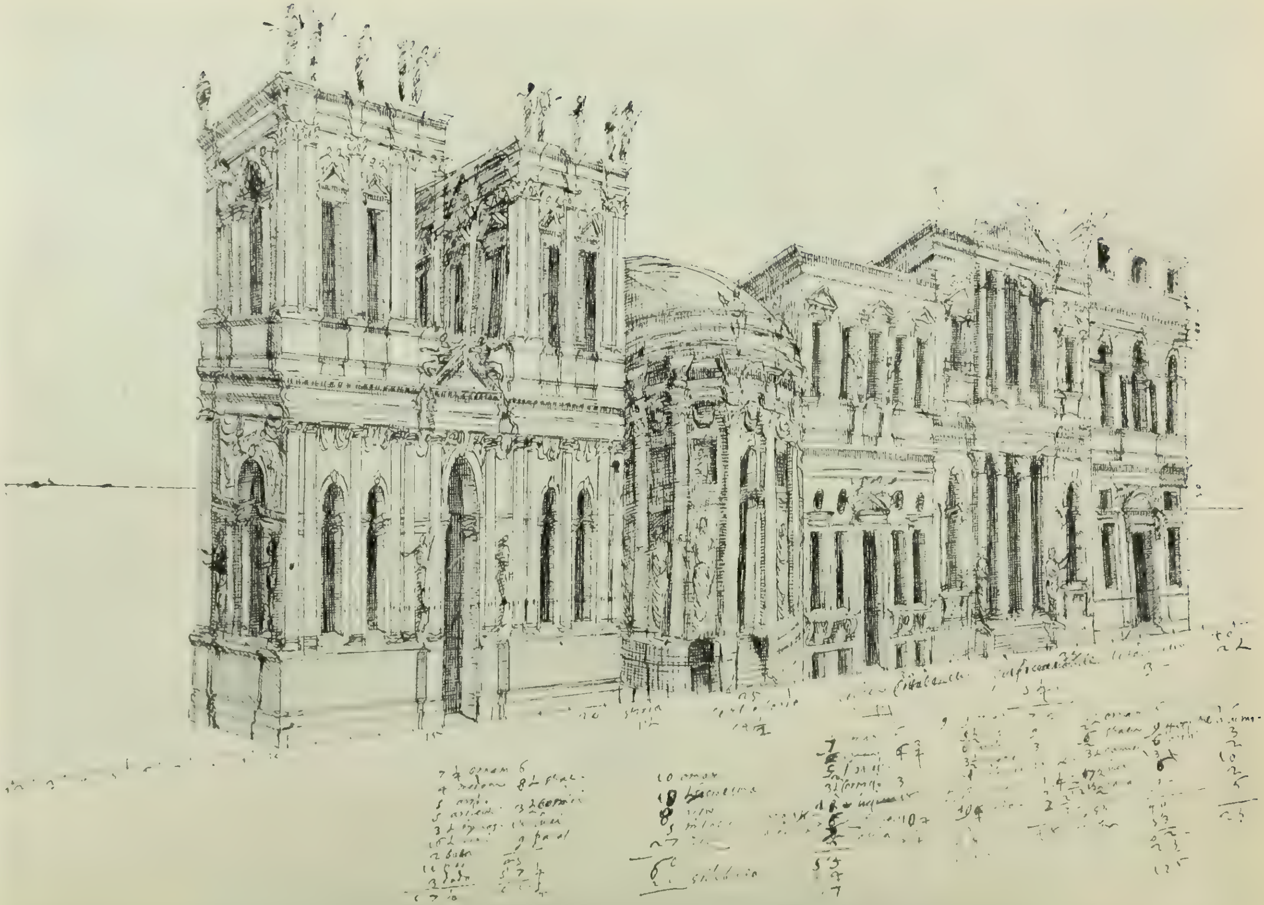

Fig. 88. Design for a Street in the Teatro Olimpico, by Scamozzi

From the original in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

onda e da' venti. . . . Non ebbero questi molto passeggiato per l'onde, che dal fondo del mare venne fuori il dio Nettuno con orrido aspetto. . . . Ma niente meno artifiziose e nuove apparvero le macchine per lo quinto intermedio: viddesi andare oscurando il cielo appoco appoco, e farsi tutto nugoloso, che quando è oscura la luna; quindi andaron crescendo le tenebre, finchè incominciarono a venir tuoni e lampi, e fra il rimbombar di quelli e 'l risplender di questi, fecesi vedere una vaga nugola di color sereno; sopra questa era un carro tirato da due paoni, grandissimi però e finti, i quali vedeansi camminare e far ruota di lor coda; sedeasi sopra il carro Giunone

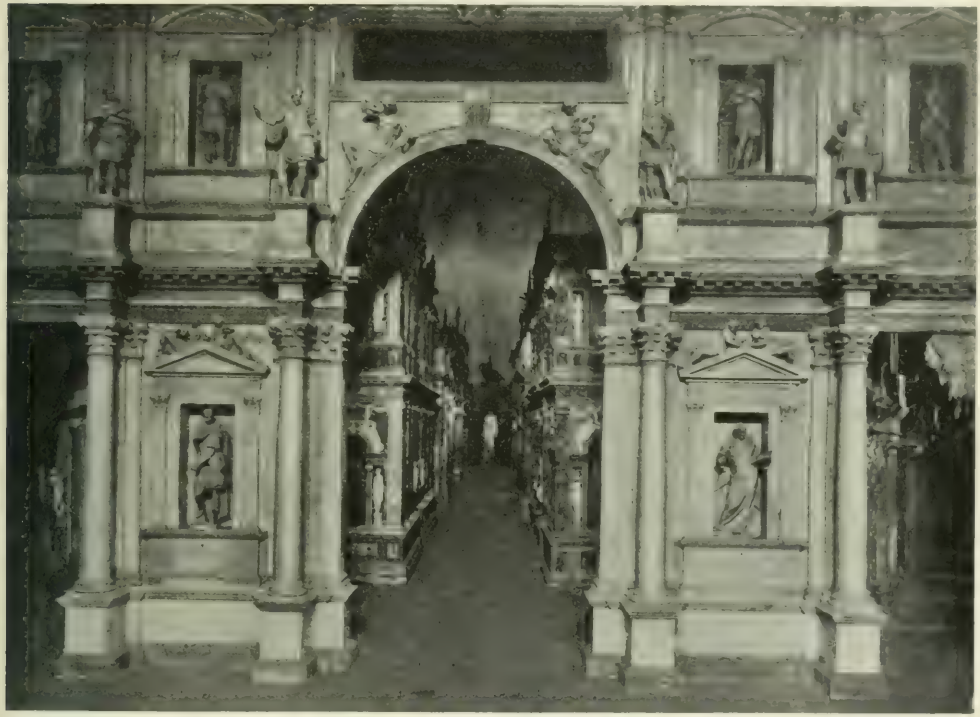

Fig. 89. THE CENTRAL ARCHWAY IN THE TEATRO OLIMPICO

Photo Alinari.

colle ninfe, due delle quali per lo sereno del dì, e due per quello della notte eran figurate . . . da' nuvoli cadeva pioggia . . . fermò la pioggia e viddesi dopo la nuvola comparire l'arcobaleno sì vero, che ognuno ne stupì. . . . Sparve allora la nuvola in modo, che parve cosa soprannaturale e miracolosa. . . . Nel sesto ed ultimo intermedio . . . comparve uno spazioso prato pieno di vaghissimi fiori ed un bosco d'ogni sorta d'alberi selvaggi, le cui cime pareva che quasi arrivassero al cielo, e questi presso ad una grotta; similmente un nobile palazzo

number of ships, dipping up and down with the waves and the winds, excited both delight and terror in the audience. . . . These had not gone far on the waves, when from the sea's depths appeared the terrible featured god Neptune. . . . But no less artful and novel seemed the machines for the fifth *intermedio*: the sky grew dark little by little, and all became cloudy as when the moon is obscured; the darkness crept on until thunder and lightning started. Amid the rumbling of the one and the flashing of the other appeared a lovely cloud of a serene colour; above that was a chariot drawn by two peacocks, very large and artificial, which were seen to move and make full display of their round tails; upon the chariot sat Juno with her nymphs, two of whom symbolized the serenity of day and two that of night . . . rain fell from the clouds . . . the rain ceased and a rainbow appeared behind the cloud in such a natural way that all were astounded. . . . The cloud disappeared in a manner that seemed supernatural and miraculous. . . . In the sixth and last *intermedio* . . . appeared a spacious plain full of most lovely flowers and a wood of every kind of forest tree, the tops of which seemed to reach to the

> con dirupate caverne attorno ; era la selva popolata di molti e varj animali, come capri, daini, cervi, lepri ed altri di quella sorta . . . mentre fecero nobilissima comparsa due schiere di pastori e pastorelle toscanne, diciannove per ischiera, che a suono di liuti, arpi, zampogne, bassi, viole, flauti, traverse, tromboni, cornetti torti e diritti . . . fecero sentire una dolcissima musica.

In such wise was theatrical art developed in Italian *intermedii* and in opera.

(vii) Machines and Lighting

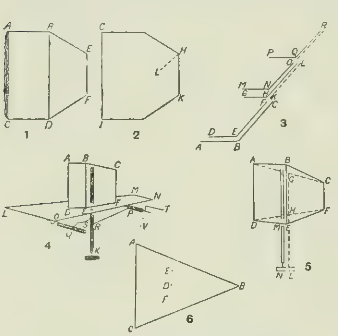

Fig. 90. Methods of changing Scenery according to Sabbatini

Figs. 1 and 2 show the use of separate covers for the Serlian frames, Fig. 3 the use of extra frames concealed within those immediately in front, and Figs. 4, 5, and 6 the use of *periaktoi*.

After L. B. Campbell, *Scenes and Machines in the Renaissance*, p. 155.

Much of what has been said already concerning scenic effects in Italian theatres obviously is also connected with the use of machines of various kinds. Unquestionably, of course, machines would have been invented independently by these enthusiastic Renascence artists, but at first the influence was almost wholly classical. The 'machine' proper or μηχανή was freely utilized for the raising and lowering of divinities. Trapdoors abounded, and some form of the ἐξώστρα was brought upon the stage. Spectacular effects were always looked for in these Renascence shows, in spite of the seeming chill of classic imitation, and such things as the best means of making thunder and lightning were eagerly studied. Pollux had already described machines by means of which both thunder and lightning might be simulated, and those machines of Pollux, varied by suggestions taken from commentators of Vitruvius, found a new lease of life on the Renascence stage. For the Greeks, for the people of the Middle Ages, and for those of the Renascence fulguration with its accompanying thunderclaps, as the prime attribute of stage deity, occupied much attention.

To light too the Renascence artists paid due attention, realizing that many of their effects must depend on the judicious placing of candles or of lamps.[1] Leone Hebreo de' Sommi, a most interesting Renascence theatre-worker, counsels that lights should be placed " per le strade, su per i tetti delle case et sopra le torri "[2] in comedy for the purpose of " imitar la letitia co'l primo aspetto della scoverta scena." [3] This machinist thus believed in symbolism of lighting, anticipating in many ways Jessner's modern Berlin experiments, for in practice he illuminated fully those scenes in a tragedy in which the subject-matter was happy, and " quando cominciò poi per il primo caso dolente "[4] he contrived "che in quell' istante la maggior parte de i lumi de la scena che non servivano alla prospettiva furono velati o spenti." [5]

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heavens, and near by a grotto; likewise a noble palace with rocky caverns round about; the wood was populated with many kinds of animals such as goats, deer, stags, hares, and others similar . . . meanwhile two bands of Tuscan shepherds and shepherdesses, nineteen in each group, made a splendid gathering. These sang beautifully to the music of lutes, harps, pipes, bases, viole, flutes, traverse, trombones, straight and bent cornets." The designs from the Chatsworth collection (Figs. 91–95) are given here because, although there is no proof that they are by Buontalenti, they serve to illustrate the above account of the *intermedii* presented at the Teatro Mediceo.

[1] That the medieval theatre also was not unaware of the value of light effects is proved even from the English mysteries. Sudden light dazzles the eyes of Joseph in the York *Bethlehem*, and Peter in *The Descent of the Holy Spirit* could not look at the apparition " so was it light." See *supra*, p. 74.

[2] " In the streets, upon house roofs and towers."

[3] " Imitating the gaiety with the first view of the scene discovered."

[4] " When the first unhappy situation occurred."

[5] " That at that moment the majority of the scene lamps which were not used for the perspective should be shaded or extinguished." For further quotations from Leone Hebreo see Appendix B.

Concerning the placing of these lights there seems to have been considerable diversity of opinion. Some would have them overhead facing the audience, that is to say in the position

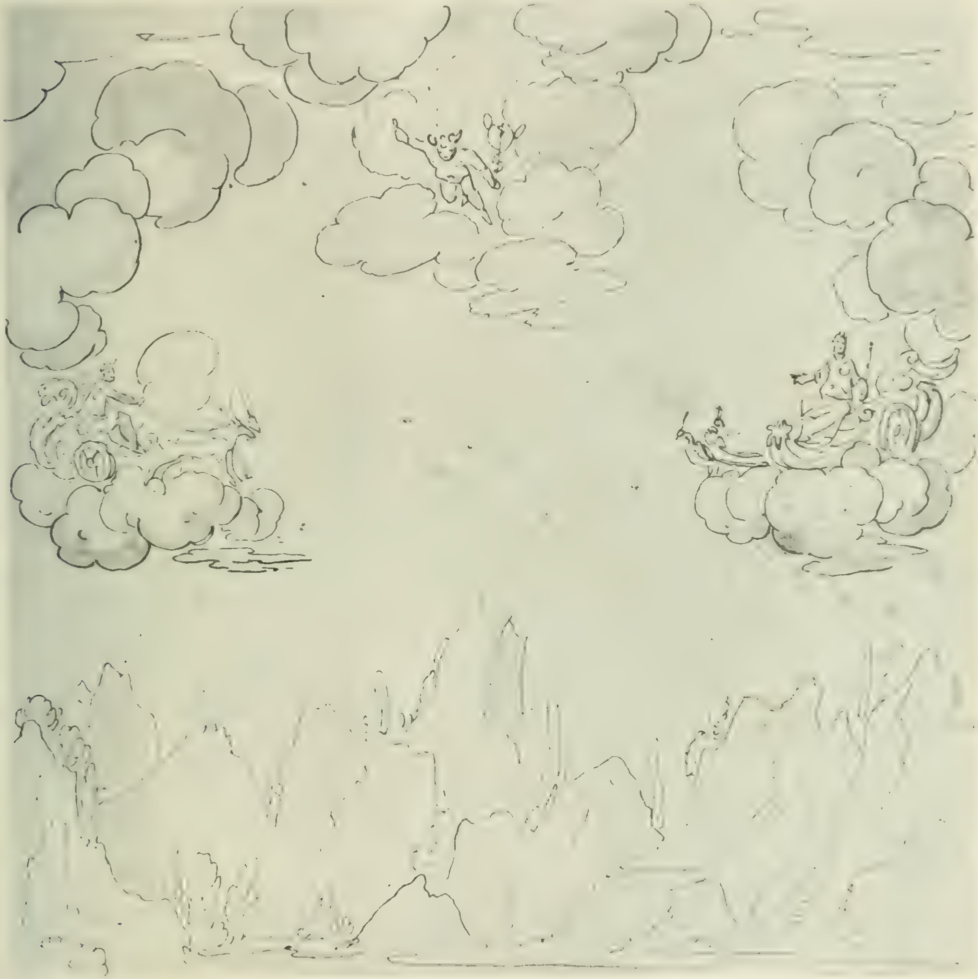

Fig. 91. Design for Cloudwork and Divinities

This may be by Buontalenti. *Cp.* Figs. 92 to 95.

From the original in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire.

Photo Victoria and Albert Museum.

which they occupied habitually in eighteenth-century English theatres. Others counselled that they should be placed behind the houses or sky borders. To these two theories Sabbatini makes objections, pointing out that side-lighting gives best that brightness and shade which aids in the theatrical illusion. There is also an interesting suggestion in his work regarding footlights. He advises that a parapet should be erected toward the front of the stage some few feet high, and suggests that lights may be placed behind it as well as behind the " heavens " or behind the side *case*. Earlier Serlio had given directions concerning the use of coloured lights. These coloured lights were to be secured by the use of bottles filled, country-chemist-wise, with red or

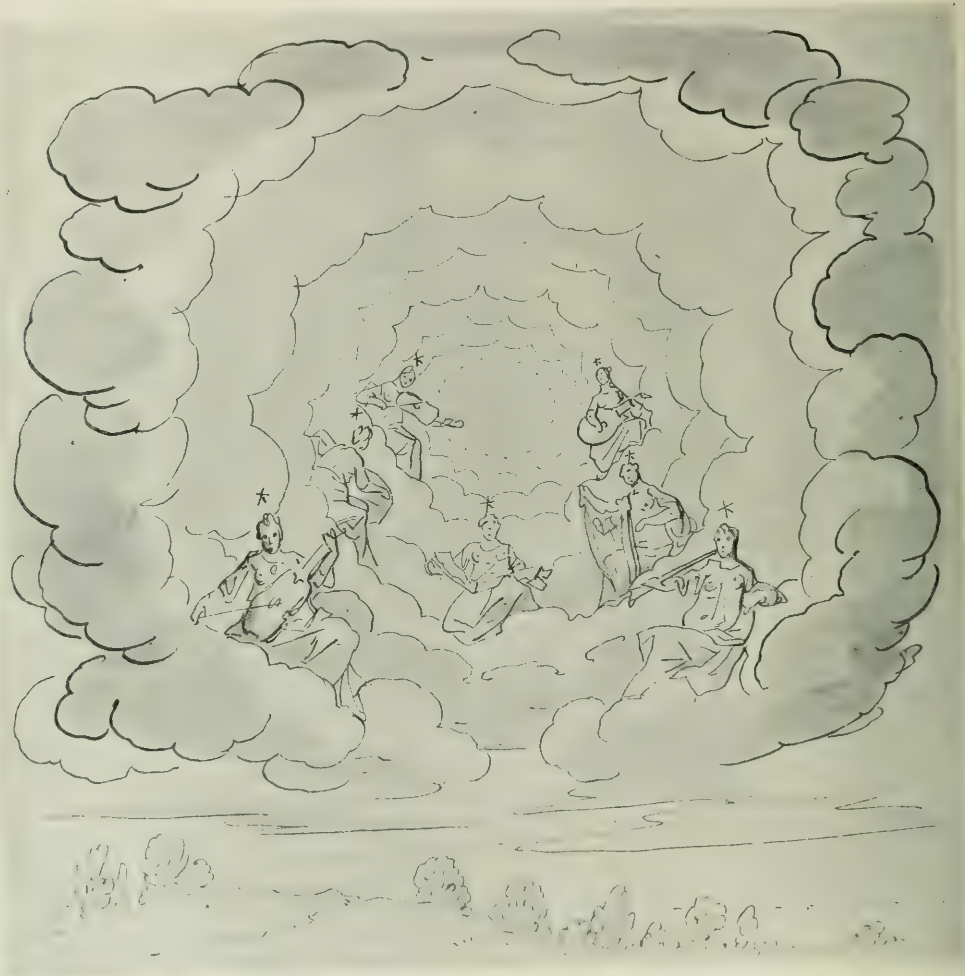

Fig. 92. DESIGN FOR CLOUDWORK

From the original in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire.
Photo Victoria and Albert Museum.

blue liquid, the candles or lamps being placed in immediate proximity to them and probably being aided by putting behind them a bright basin as a reflector. Devices of this kind were, we know, freely used in Italy, and made their reappearance in the masques contrived in England by Inigo Jones.

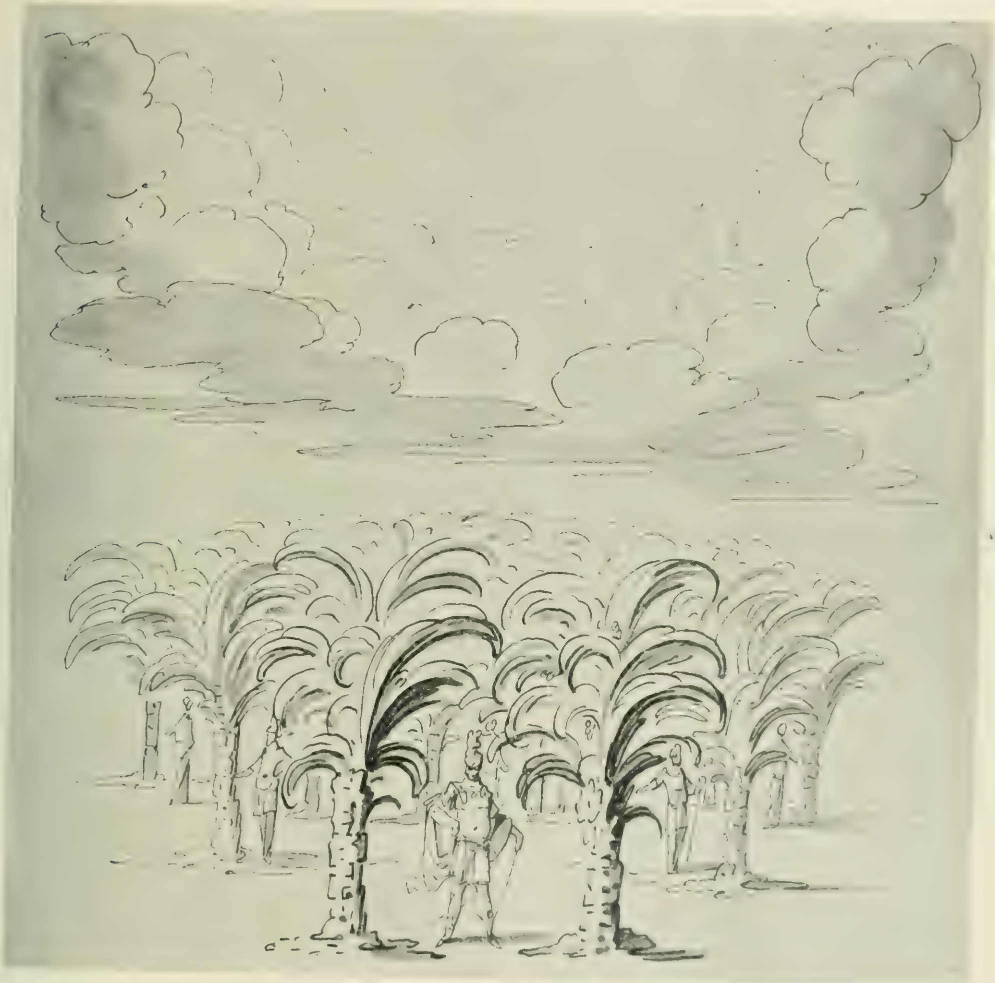

Fig. 93. Design for a 'Desert' Scene

From the original in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire.

Photo Victoria and Albert Museum.

Reference has been made above to the 'heavens.' Sabbatini again provides us with a good deal of information regarding this necessary part of a theatre's equipment. As this is a matter of some importance his words may be quoted directly:

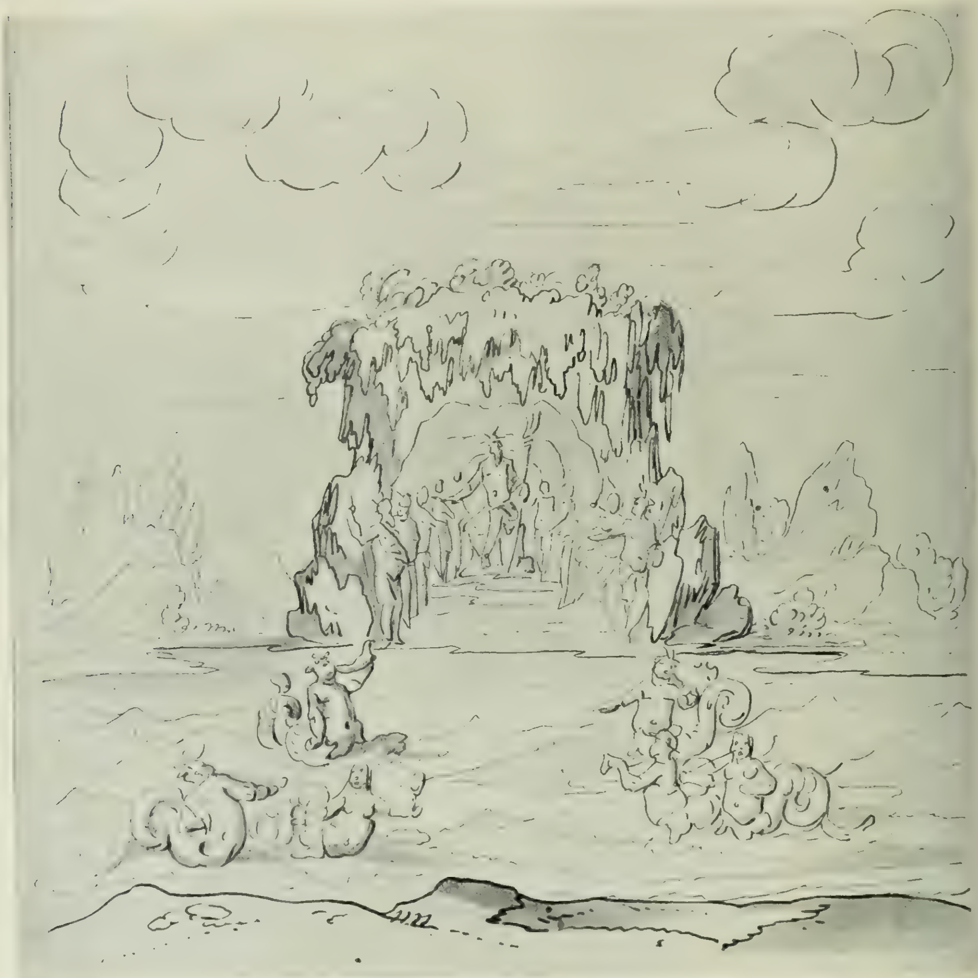

Fig. 94. NEPTUNE AND SEA-GODS

From the original in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire.

Photo Victoria and Albert Museum.

> Stabilito il piano del Palco, si doverà dar principio a fare il cielo, quale doverà essere ò intiero, ò spezzato; se intiero, vi sarà poca fatica poichè farassi con tre, ò quattro Centine, ò Arcali fatti in minor portione di cerchio, dando loro (nel metterli in opera) il suo declivio di due oncie per piedi, raccomandogli con buoni e forti tiranti

alle Travi del Tetto, ò altro, acciò che stiano sicuro. Da poi si stenderanno per lo lungo ad esse Centine legnami lungi, e sottili in giusta lontananza bene inchiodati, quali legni da noi volgarmente vengono nominati

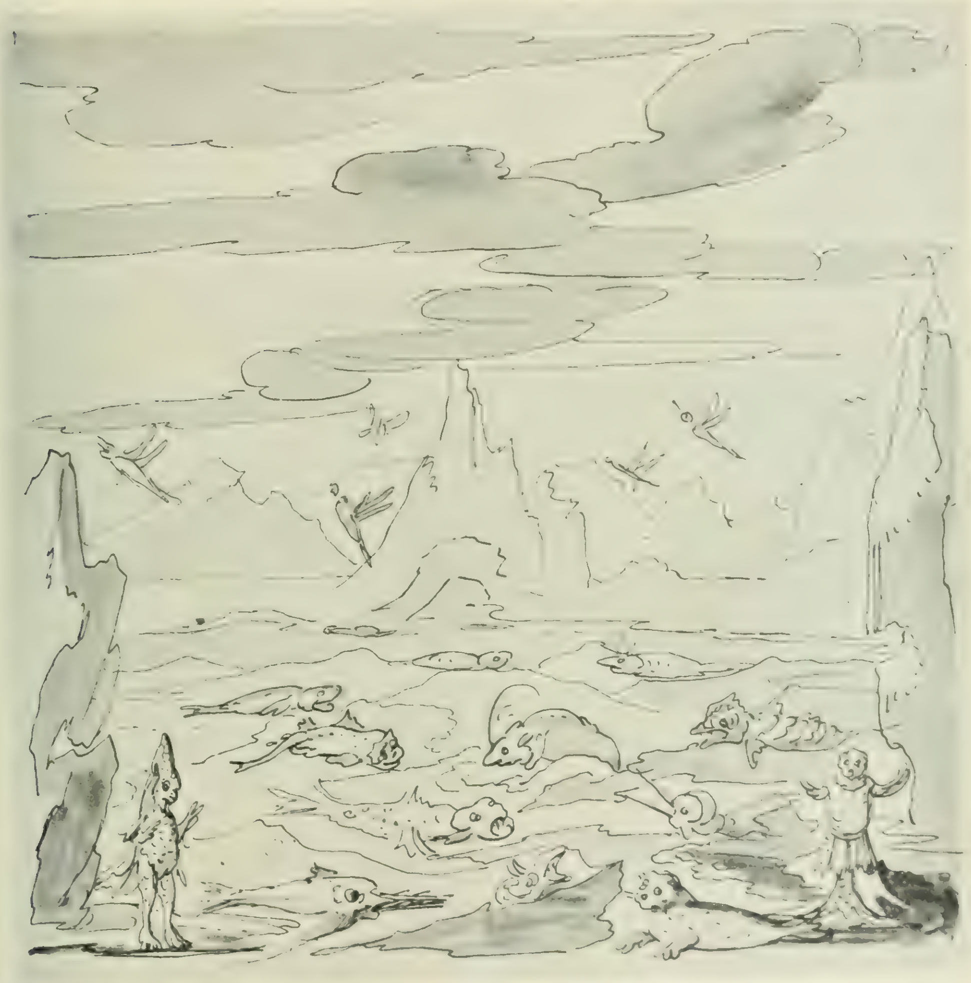

Fig. 95. Marine Monsters

From the original in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire.

Photo. Victoria and Albert Museum.

Ciavaroni, et in Toscana Correnti. Compita questa seconda orditura vi si stenderanno le Tele, le quali vogliono essere imbrocate più spesso, che sia possibile acciòche non vengano a fare qualche cattivo effetto, e così sarà compito il Cielo intero. . . . Quando bisognerà ne gli Intermedij, che le Machine saliscono al Cielo, ò da esso calino

sopra il Palco, in questo caso si dovrà fare il Cielo spezzato, sì per la commodità, che apporta a tale operatione come anco per il gusto, ò maraviglia, che ne prendono gli spettatori, non vedendo come si nascondano le machine venendo da Terra, ò come uscendo dal Cielo esse calino a basso.[1]

What was probably at first but a simple cloth was soon elaborated into a vast series of cloud effects, as in the Buontalenti designs noted in this chapter, where deities could ride on platforms behind gossamer veils and disappear without anyone's noticing how the vanishing trick was done.[2]

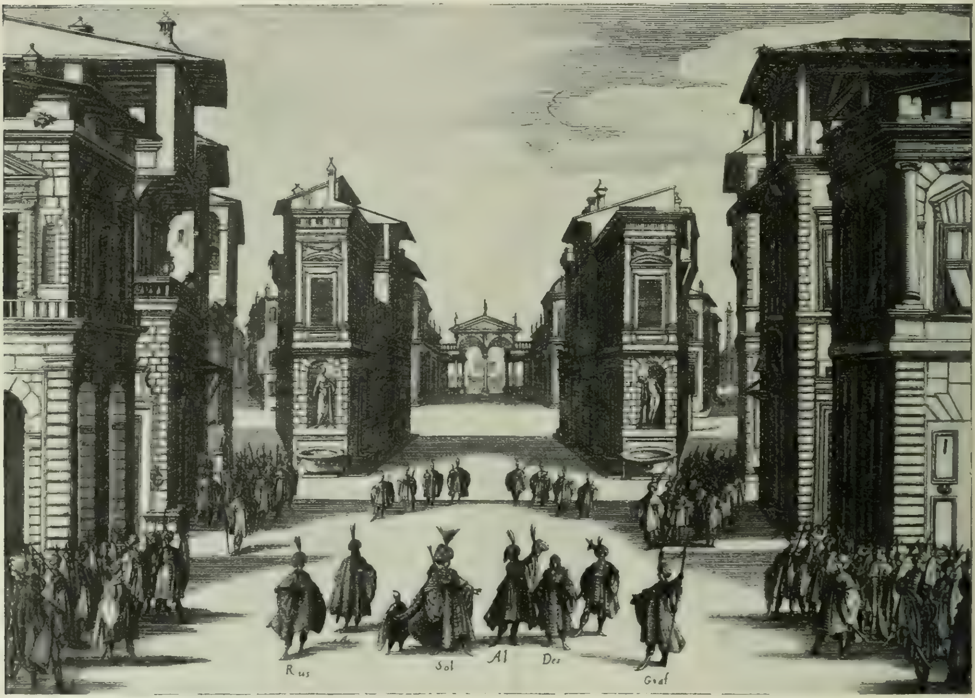

Fig. 96. The Setting for Bonarelli's "Il Solimano" (1620). Design by Alfonso Parigi, engraved by Callot

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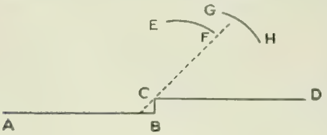
[1] "When the stage floor has been arranged first thought must be given to the heavens, which are either 'entire' or 'cut'; if entire, there will be little difficulty, for these are made with three or four rounded frames or arches; when these are placed in action they are given a slope of 2 inches in a foot, and are fixed firmly and well to the beams of the roof or some other support so that they are secure. Then to these frames there are affixed lengthwise long thin rods, nailed on at suitable distances. These we commonly call *Ciavaroni*, and in Tuscan *Correnti*. When this piece has been finished the cloths are stretched over the rods. These should be nailed down as frequently as possible to avoid any ill effect. So the 'entire' heavens are completed. . . . When in *intermedii* it is necessary for machines to ascend to the sky or descend thence to the stage, one must have a 'cut' heaven, both for convenience and for the delight and wonder which audiences take in it, since they cannot see how the machines which rise from the earth disappear or how they descend from the heavens to the stage."



The accompanying sketch shows the arrangement of this 'cut' sky, where C D is the stage level, A B the auditorium level, and E F, G H part of the cloudwork.

[2] See also the Torelli designs given in Appendix C.

So at least contemporaries said. What exactly we to-day would think of the effects is another matter. That they were striking possibly no one can deny; that they were perfect in lighting and in finish perhaps no one would care to assert. It is noticeable, at least, that, in spite of the fact that so many eulogists have praised the transformation scenes, so practical a man as Sabbatini seems to fear lest the alterations might not take place with sufficient ease. He counsels that a man may make a disturbance at the rear of the theatre to distract attention; or that a crash should be made there; or that a sudden noise of drums and trumpets be raised to take away the minds of the audience from the shifting scenery. Curtains, of course, were rarely employed. Sabbatini does describe the method of working one, but his account is only half-hearted. It is peculiar that when Ariosto's *I Suppositi* was revived at Rome there was a painted front curtain which "si lasciò cascare" (was let drop) at the beginning of the performance, even as the Roman *auleum* had done. This curtain, which Ariosto himself refers to in the *Orlando Furioso*:[1]

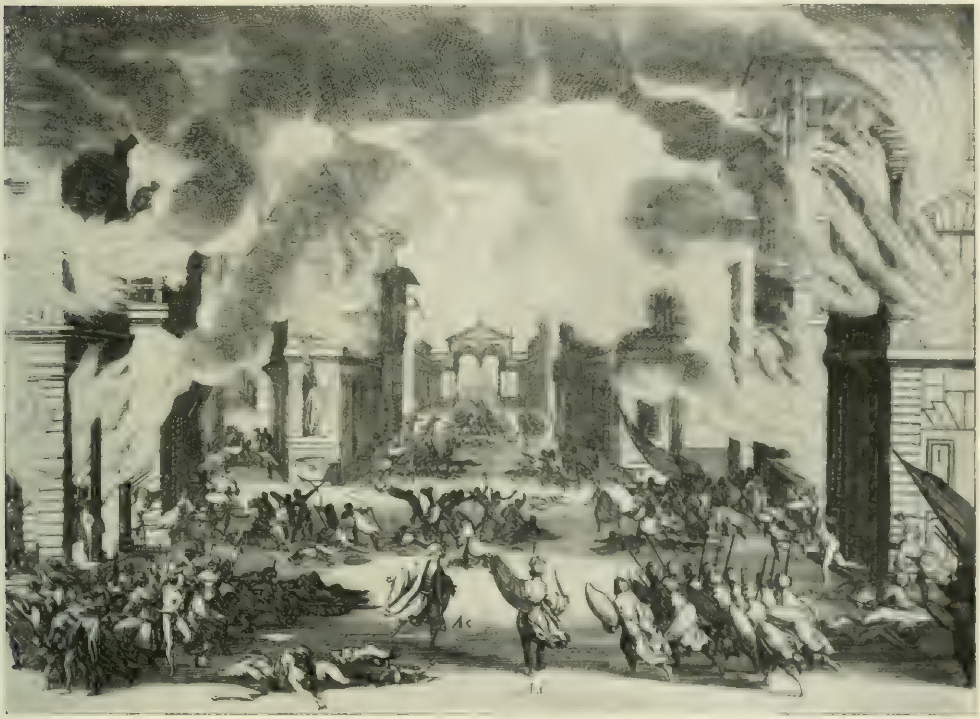


Fig. 97. THE SETTING FOR BONARELLI'S "IL SOLIMANO" (1620)

This shows the city (*cp.* Fig. 96) in flames.
The scene in *Il Solimano* is constant throughout the five acts.

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[1] xxxii, 80.

Quale al cader de le cortine suole
Parer, fra mille lampade, la scena,
D'Archi, et di più d'una superba mole
D'oro, e di statue e di pitture piena [1]—

was designed, however, not to form a means of concealing change of scene but to surprise the audience by the sudden revelation of the scenic glory in the first act. Much as these Renascence theorists experimented, it is surprising to note how they, and their successors, failed to realize the opportunities which a front curtain offered to an ambitious machinist and manager.[2]

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[1] "As at the curtain-fall we see appear,
'Mid candles multitudinous, the view,
The arches and the statues, paintings clear
And massive buildings bright with golden hue."

[2] On this question of the Renascence curtain W. J. Lawrence's *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* may be consulted.

CHAPTER V

THE COMMEDIA DELL' ARTE

(i) THE ORIGINS

IN the last chapter we have been breathing the rarefied air of serene humanistic speculation. For the theatres thus built at the Courts of Italian princes were written pseudo-classic tragedies and *commedie sostenute*, comedies based in all essentials upon the best traditions of Terence and of Plautus. Alongside of these more dignified presentations, however, must have been constantly enacted the *sacre rappresentazioni*, or mystery dramas, and there must have been 'interlude' players performing their crude little farces such as we have found in medieval France. Above all we must remember the growth in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of the *commedia dell' arte* or the *commedia all' improvviso*, which sprang into sudden fame just about the time when Ferrarese princes were delicately experimenting with classical stages. The *commedia dell' arte* is essentially a popular form of artistic amusement, and its influence upon Continental theatres and upon Continental drama for upward of two hundred years is literally incalculable.

In this book I am deliberately eschewing any study of the drama as such, but the *commedia dell' arte* is not drama in the sense that written plays are. It is fundamentally a thing of the actor, the machinist, the costumier. At times, with Molière and with Goldoni, it may pass into the realm of literature, but it is nevertheless, in essence, unashamedly a creation of the theatre, owing no definite allegiance to a poet. It is for this reason that the *commedia dell' arte* must find a place here. On the other hand, volumes could be written on this subject, and we must deal only with the most outstanding features of this enthralling subject. And first must be explained exactly what the *commedia dell' arte* is. The chief point of interest lies in the fact that the whole of the dialogue was improvised as occasion demanded. The manager, or *concertatore*, drew out his *scenario* which outlined the main elements in the plot and noted pieces of comic business technically known as *lazzi*, in which the humorous characters could horseplay at will. Each actor took a separate part which he performed perhaps to the end of his days—once a Pantalone, always a Pantalone. Each too had his own *repertorio* of *concetti*, *uscite*, and *chiusetti*, series of formal expressions or tags of dialogue which he could use when conversing with others in set situations, or when entering the stage, or when leaving the stage. By means of these he could thus make a fitting exit, or continue conversation in a witty style with his fellow-actors. It must be obvious that, while this style of comedy definitely divorced literature from the theatre, it developed an extremely high technical skill on the parts of the actors. The Italian players soon became the masters of Europe.

How, it may be asked, did this comedy arise? Fortuitously, or springing from some appreciable source? The answer to this question cannot be given with any certitude; but the balance of evidence is on the side of those who see in the *commedia dell' arte* a relic of the old Roman mime. Both the Atellanae and the Phlyakes[1] had been in origin improvisational, and it is, as we have seen, highly probable that, in the darkest days of the Middle Ages, *mimi* had continued the tradition which they had set. It is thus noticeable that, while the *commedia sostenuta* has many features which it shares with the *commedia dell' arte*, in one thing it is distinct both from the popular Italian comedy and from medieval farce. The stock theme of a Terentian play is the presentation of the love of a youth for a girl who, apparently his inferior in birth, is discovered to be the long-lost daughter of some near friend of his father's. Neither Terence nor Plautus indulges in jests at cuckolds; their satire of old men is kindly and urbane. The Atellanae, however, and the later mimes regularly treated the old man as a dolt and a fool; the woman who is loved is not a maiden but a wife. This theme of old man, wife, lover, is one which reappears again and again in French and English farce of the Middle Ages; it also forms a stock theme for many jests in the *commedia dell' arte*.

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[1] See *supra*, pp. 30, 58–9.

Furthermore, when we come to analyse the stock characters presented in classical mime and in sixteenth-century popular comedy we realize at once that there is some clear connexion between the groups. Even in name there is a similarity, for the two comic characters among the Romans were called *sanniones*; their descendants in Italy were styled *zanni*. Harlequin seems to have a clear ancestry, as has Brighella; the *dottore*, the *capitano*, and *pantalone* we have met in earlier times; the young lover, the heroine, and the old men are stock types. The masks which the various characters wore on the stage recall in many ways the masks of antique times.

It must not be supposed, of course, that the tradition was a perfectly simple one, or that it was uninfluenced by cross-currents of national or epoch fashion. Rather must it be asserted that, while connexions are to be discovered among various forms of early drama, the forms remained often distinct as regards their special structure. Already it has been seen that there were inter-relations between the types of the (literary) Aristophanic comedy, the (literary) Roman comedy, the (popular) Phlyakes, and the (popular) Atellan farce. It may be suggested that the first type had as a by-form, or maybe actually sprang from, an indigenous Doric mime-drama, which itself was carried by Greek colonists to Southern Italy, where it flourished under the Phlyakes. Meanwhile an Oscan mime-farce, born in Atella, met with the Phlyakes and developed into a popular form. As we have seen, this type of mime was carried on in a direct line through the Middle Ages, producing that *Interludium de Clerico et Puella* of which mention has already been made. At the same time, this is not the whole of the story. Greece stands between East and West; and an Eastern Empire lorded it at Byzantium during the period when a Western Empire had its capital in Rome. The mime, in various forms, of which the puppet-show was one, moved toward the Orient as well, and there flourished under Theodosius and the later emperors. In the Far East this mime tradition still flourishes in the character of Karagoz, the Turkish Punch, and may be traced perhaps in certain features of Indian, Japanese, and especially Chinese dramatic shows and entertainments. This Eastern mime was introduced to the West during the Renascence period. Not only might *mimi*, after the fall of Byzantium, have come over to Italy, but we have such direct links between East and West as are supplied by Caterina Cornaro, ex-Queen of Cyprus, in whose Court were entertainers from the Orient. If this hypothesis be accepted, it is found that a clear explanation is provided for the sudden popularity of the *commedia dell' arte*. Fundamentally, the *commedia dell' arte* is based on a Western tradition, which is to be found alike in England, France, and Italy; but its particular form in the sixteenth century is due to the new force which came with the introduction of the Byzantine mime, itself sharing a common origin with its Western brother.

(ii) THE STOCK CHARACTERS: THE 'SERIOUS' MASKS

In discussing the chief stock characters of this immensely popular improvised comedy, we find that nearly all the *scenarii* which are now extant are divided into two parts—that which concerns the non-comic and that which concerns the comic persons. The non-comic char-

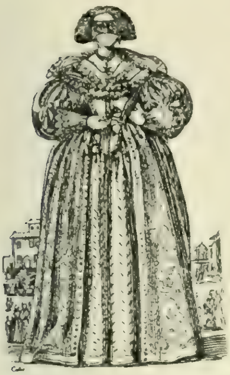

Fig. 98. La Comica accesa. Design by Callot

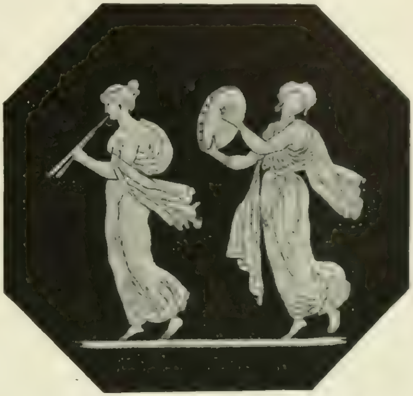

Fig. 99. Dancing-girls from a Herculaneum Frieze

From Duchartre, *La Comédie italienne*.

actors are, naturally, of least interest, and may be rapidly dismissed. The *comico acceso* or young lover is an inoffensive gallant of the age. Dressed usually in contemporary garments, he is a representative, albeit a colourless one, of the young men of Roman comedy. He may be called Lelio or Flavio or Orazio or Ottavio, but his uninspired nature remains the same. With him is always and necessarily associated the *comica accesa*, like her lover, uninteresting and subdued in tone (Fig. 98). She is often a young girl, curbed by hard parents, who desires marriage; sometimes she is merely a kind of doll, a puppet for the plot. Aurelia, Ginevra, Isabella, Flaminia, or Lucinda, she too is a fashionable young person of the time and has no special characteristics. Perhaps her quiet nature depends upon the mute maidens of Plautan comedy. Occasionally there enter in one or two other types of a similar character. The *cantarina*, who is generally also the *ballerina*, does not really play a part in the *scenario*; she is introduced purely to present *intermedii* of a musical kind. If, however, she does not have much interest for us in this way she has a considerable value as a descendant of a type of performer well known in Roman days. Attention has been drawn to the fact that the sketch of Camilla Veronese in the eighteenth century recalls precisely the Francischina of Callot in the seventeenth century, while the latter might almost have been suggested by the dancing-girl of a Herculaneum frieze (Figs. 99, 100, 101). The young ladies of the Italian comedy are, of course, attended by their maid-servants, Ricciolina, Nina, Betta, Olivetta, and (by 1683), most famous of all, Colombina. Colombina has many different costumes, extending from an ordinary maid's dress to a fanciful white costume such as has been preserved in pantomime. She is pert, witty, the lover or the loved of Arlecchino.

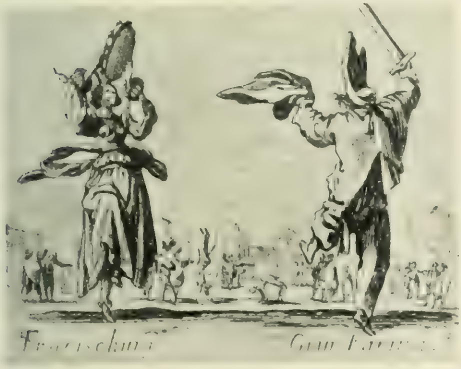

Fig. 100. Franciscina and Gian Farina. Design by Callot

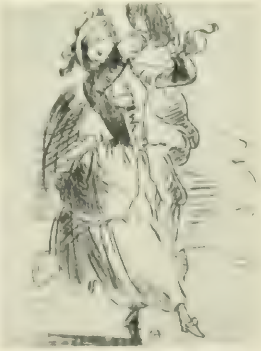

Fig. 101. Camilla Veronese as Ballerina

From Duchartre, *op. cit.*

(iii) The Comic Masks: Arlecchino and Brighella

These more or less 'serious' characters must, however, be placed on one side in favour of the bevy of exaggerated, blundering, astute, and rascally types who have ever made the *commedia dell' arte* what it is. And chief of all comes Harlequin—Arlecchino—Arlequin—call him what you will. With a spring he leaps on the stage, with a fantastic gesture he is gone; and it is as difficult to catch the real Harlequin as it is for other characters to hold him on the stage.

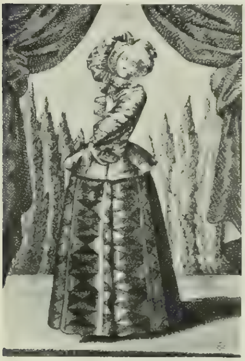

Fig. 102. Arlecchina, late Seventeenth Century

From Duchartre, *op. cit.*

Some say he is the god Mercury come to life again, god of thieves and beggars; others declare that he is only a certain wicked serving-man of Arles who took refuge in Bergamo. Some trace his black mask to phalliphoric negro slaves in Roman mime; others see in it only the brown skin of swarthy Bergamese. Some make his name derive from a distinguished Hachille du Harlay, who, as patron of the theatre, gave his own surname to the type; others find in it only a diminutive of *harle* or *herle*, a gaily coloured water-bird. So we go on, he himself jesting at our serious faces, telling us that he was named Harlequin because his father "en langue asiatique" cried "Ar lé chin" to his ass. Perhaps we shall never know; perhaps we shall understand him better if we accept him, as he accepts himself, as he is.[1]

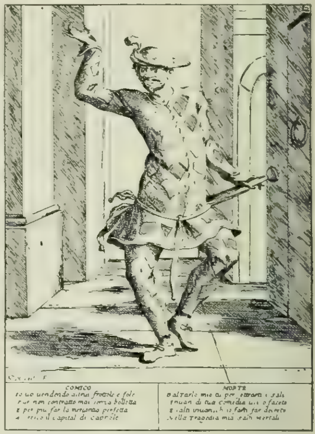

Fig. 104. Arlecchino, early Seventeenth Century

This shows the transition between the patchwork and the formal checks in Harlequin's costume.

From Duchartre, *op. cit.*

When first we meet him he is a rascally beggar, a thing literally "of shreds and patches," boasting a black half-mask surmounted with a hare's tail, a wallet for ill-earned gains and a wooden sword (Fig. 103). So he continues till the sixteenth century when, probably feeling himself raised in social estate, he changes his patches for that chequered costume which he has retained down to the present day. His mask, a peculiar mixture of stupidity and cunning, aptly symbolizes his nature, for Harlequin can be deceived as well as deceive. Sometimes he is the master of the plot; sometimes for him are reserved the lashes and the buffetings which his dull wits prompt him not how to escape.

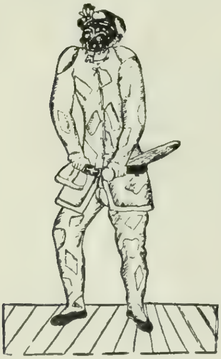

Fig. 103. Arlecchino, late Sixteenth Century

Note the patchwork garments.
From Duchartre, *op. cit.*

Harlequin is one of the two chief *zanni*, his companion being Brighella or his kin. Where Harlequin has a touch of the human in his fantastic make-up, Brighella is entirely inhuman. His nose is curved and drawn sharply back above his lips, his lips themselves are sensual, his eyes are sated, evil, avaricious. Harlequin will pick a pocket with the best grace in the world; Brighella will think no more of knifing a man in a narrow alley-way. Harlequin's wooden sword may do no harm, but Brighella's dagger has a sharp edge. The costume of this unsavoury rascal is well known to us. Moderately wide trousers and a short jacket, laced with green braid, were his from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, and usually from his shoulders hung a short cloak similar to that worn in Roman comedy. Perhaps of his kin, for he is generally a servant, are Scapino, clad in loose garments in the early seventeenth century, but later dressed as a valet with green and white lace, and Mezzetino, also loosely costumed in the earlier period and, in the eighteenth century, given a costume similar to that of Scapino but laced in red and white. Perhaps, however, Mezzetino belongs rather to the Pedrolino (Pierrot) class than to the kin of Brighella. Whereas in Callot's designs Scapino is clearly a brigandish type, the early Mezzetino seems to be a fool.

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[1] For still another suggestion see Driessen's *Der Ursprung des Harlekin* (1904), particularly pp. 66–86.

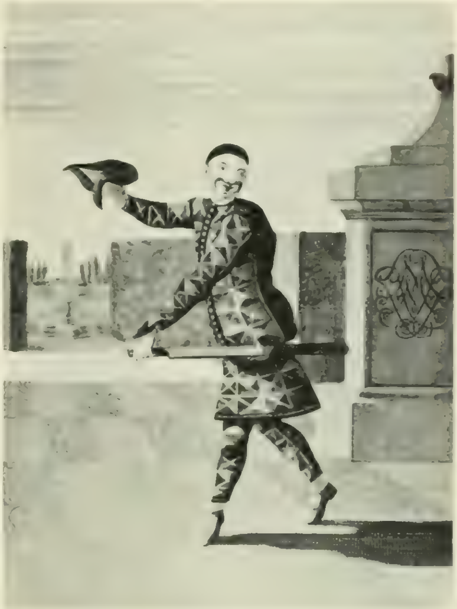

Fig. 105. ARLEQUIN AS CHINAMAN

From a coloured print in the possession of Sir Israel Gollancz.

(iv) PULCINELLA AND THE CAPITANO

Before dealing with the typical older masks we may turn to one who has remained with us even after Harlequin and Brighella are dead. In treating of Pulcinella or Punch, however, we must bear in mind the fact that, in the earliest *scenarii*, all these characters did not appear, but merely a selection of such as best accorded with the main outlines of the story. For Punch has been discovered a wonderful ancestry. He is the descendant, say many, of Maccus of the Atellan farce, perhaps with touches of Bucco thrown in, and owes his name perhaps to the *pullus gallinaceus*, or 'cock' which, it is averred, was a name for Maccus. It is a peculiar fact in this connexion that an Oscan, no doubt a buffoon, is introduced by Horace at a feast. His name is given as Cicirrus. Whether this is, or is not, the name of a character, we find (1) that it is explained as meaning 'cock' by an early commentator, (2) that a Roman vase painting shows an actor with a huge cock's feather in his hat, (3) that a coxcomb is regularly associated with Punch, and (4) (most striking of all) Callot in the seventeenth century depicts a Punch-like figure, boasting two enormous cock's feathers, and calls him *Cucurucu*. Punch, with his pugnacious nature, his hump, his hooked nose, and his coxcomb, appears to have a very respectable antiquity behind him; and it is peculiar to find that it is he, above all the characters of the *commedia dell' arte*, who has

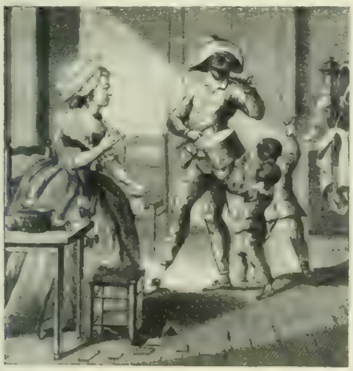

Fig. 106. ARLEQUIN, EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

From Florian, *Le Bon Ménage*.

most surely retained the affections of the populace. Our street urchins still cluster round the curtained booth, itself a relic of the Middle Ages, to watch the vicious and cunning little tyrant beat or kill his wife, hoodwink a policeman, and escape in the end gloriously from the gallows.

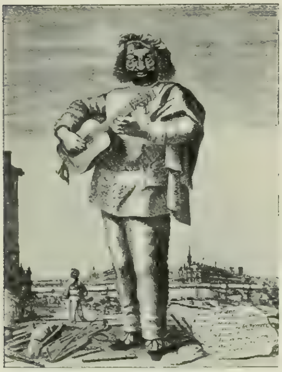
Fig. 107. Brighella, or Buffet. Seventeenth Century

From Duchartre, *op. cit.*

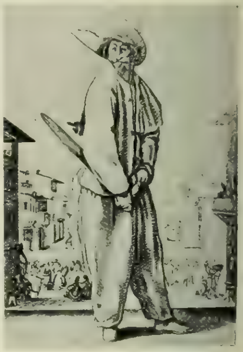
Fig. 108. Scapino. Design by Callot

Punch is most nearly allied to Brighella, but he is older and even more sophisticated. His deeply wrinkled mask with its hooked nose and vicious eyes well symbolizes his nature. He is cruel, inhuman, egoistic, self-seeking—a pleasant rascal perhaps, but one with whom we care not to have overmuch acquaintance. For once we rejoice in the theatre's fourth wall.

Tracing his ancestry likewise to ancient classic times, the Capitano—Capitan Spavento della Valle Inferna, Capitan Cocodrillo, Capitan Rinoceronte, Capitan Spezzafer, or Capitan Sangue y Fuego—strides forward as an arresting personality, full of boasts and vaunting, but an arrant coward as soon as any fighting is toward. He is simply the *miles gloriosus* of the antique stage made popular and more grotesque. Clad in garments which suggest now an Italian *condottiere*, now a Spanish bravo, with a long-nosed mask and fierce moustache, he vaunts his way through many a *scenario*, creating terror by his appearance and laughter by his poltroonish cowardice.

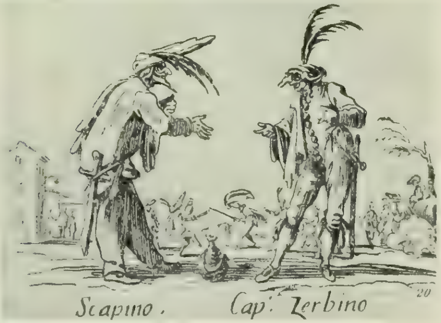

Fig. 109. Scapino and Capitan Zerbino. Design by Callot

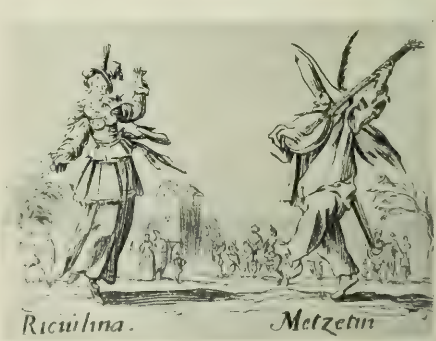

Fig. 110. Riciulina and Metzetin. Design by Callot

(v) Pantalone

Among the old-men types Pantalone is unquestionably the most important. A Venetian merchant by trade, he is, of course, merely the old man of the mime reborn in Renascence Europe. Avaricious to a degree, fearful of any violence, inclined to meddle in high politics, a cuckold, a cheated father, he is always a source of cruel merriment. Euclion in the *Aulularia* is his literary prototype, although nearer models must have existed in the *fabula Atellana.* Originally he seems to have worn a long, red cloak, which, however, was early changed to black. His gown with the Turkish slippers and the red cap have become definitely traditional. His mask is dark, with a prominent curved nose, white hair, and a long beard.

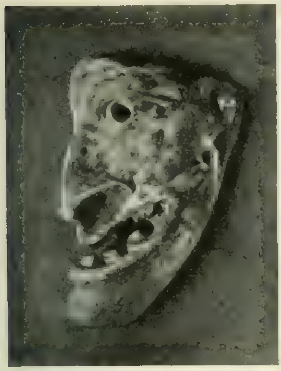

Fig. 111. A Roman Mask
This should be compared with the Punch-type of the *commedia dell' arte.*
From Bieber, *op. cit.* Original in the Provinzialmuseum, Bonn

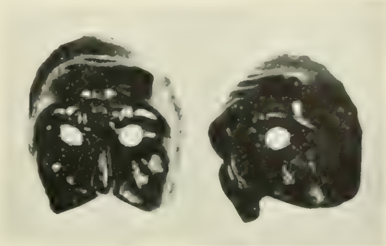

Fig. 112. Mask of Pulcinella
From Duchartre, *op. cit.*

His companion is the old Dottore—Dottor Partesana, Dottor Graziano Baloardo—later to be translated to literary comedy as Molière's Le Médecin. He is the Pedant of ancient comedy, and appears as philosopher, grammarian, or medical man in a variety of diverting situations. Usually a friend of Pantalone, he serves, like him, as a butt for laughter, mocked at by his wife or his mistress, cheated by a rascally servant of a Harlequin or a Brighella. His costume is obviously that of the professor, black in colour with a dark cloak covering a black garment which falls to his knees. His hat, in contradistinction to that sported by Pantalone, is likewise black. A dark mask with red cheeks and a short beard completes his equipment. He too has his ancestry, for his forefather was called Dossennus in the *fabula Atellana.* There apparently his pedantic wisdom and his real folly caused as much merriment as they did in Renascence times.

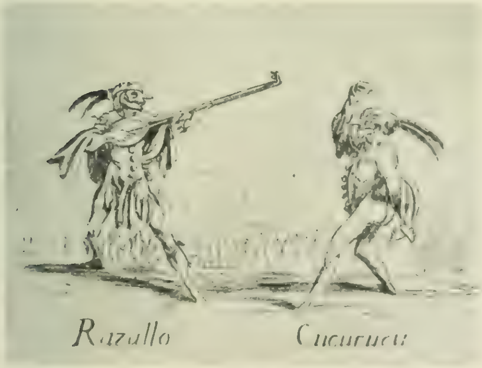

Fig. 113. Razullo and Cucurucu. Design by Callot

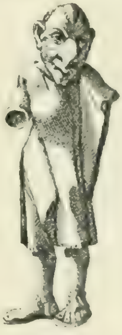

Fig. 114
Terra-cotta of a Roman Mime
From Ficoroni, *De Larvis scenicis*, Pl. IX

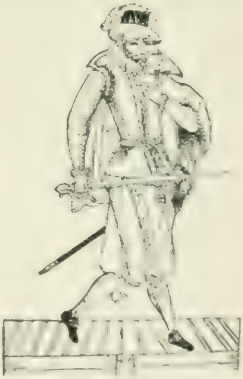

Fig. 115. Capitano, Seventeenth Century
From Duchartre, *op. cit.*

(vi) THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MASKS

To outline the many subsidiary characters and the many descendants of these major figures would take up many times the space which can here be allotted to the *commedia dell' arte*, but a few words may be said in conclusion concerning the significance of this type of drama in the history of the theatre. Already it has been indicated that the Italian popular comedy is traceable back to an ancestry in the Roman *mimus*, and this assumption is strengthened instead of weakened by the insistence which some historians have laid on the fact that French farce, independently of Italian, produced stock figures of a similar type. There has thus been adduced the Huret print of Michau (a kind of Pantalone) and Dr Boniface, as well as the print by Abraham Bosse showing a farce at the Hôtel de Bourgogne (Fig. 123). In the latter is shown Gros-Guillaume—

L'ingénieux Guillaume
Contrefaisant l'homme de Cour
Se plaist à gourmander l'Amour
Troussé comme un joueur de paume [1]—

Turlupin, and Gaultier Garguille. It is undoubtedly true that, while we can discover Italian parallels for the two last mentioned, the old fat Falstaffian Gros-Guillaume is difficult to place.

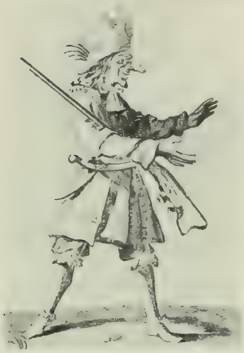

Fig. 116. CAPITANO, SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

From Duchartre, *op. cit.*

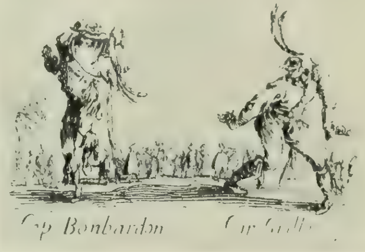

Fig. 117. CAPITAN BONBARDON AND CAPITAN GRILLO. DESIGN BY CALLOT

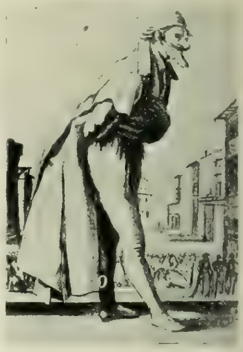

Fig. 118. PANTALONE. DESIGN BY CALLOT

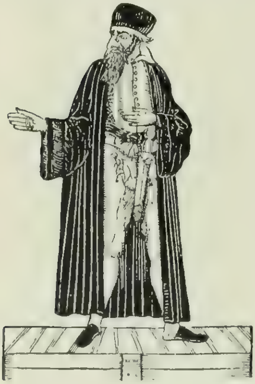

Fig. 119. PANTALONE

From Duchartre, *op. cit.*

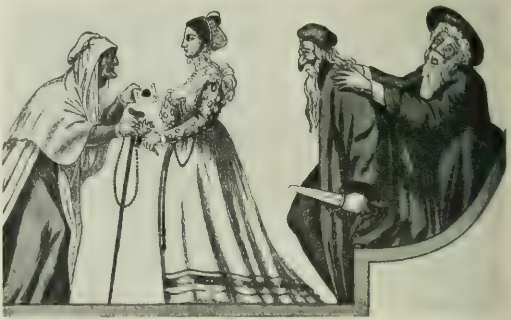

Fig. 120. PANTALONE AND HIS DAUGHTER

This should be contrasted with the Roman comedy scene shown in Fig. 29.

From Duchartre, *op. cit.*

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[1] "The clever Guillaume, counterfeiting a courtier, is pleased to chide at love, trussed up like a tennis-player."

His grossly distended stomach, his short trousers and bearded face certainly have but small connexion with the stock masks of Italy, and we may believe that he is a remnant of a French tradition ultimately taking its rise from the same mime source.

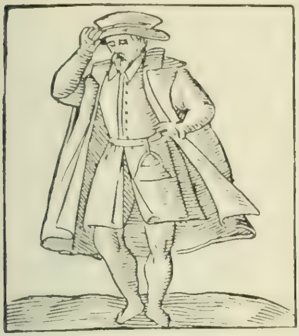
Fig. 121. Il Dottore, Seventeenth Century

From Duchartre, *op. cit.*

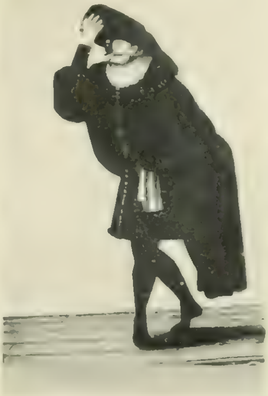
Fig. 122. Docteur Balouardo, Eighteenth Century

From Duchartre, *op. cit.*

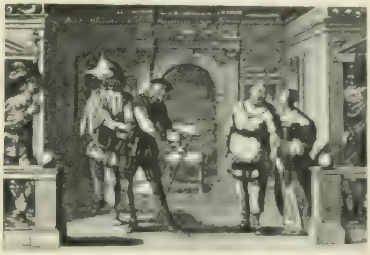
Fig. 123. Scene at the Hôtel de Bourgogne

This shows Gros-Guillaume, Gaultier Garguille, and Turlupin. Note the formal setting.

At an early date the Italian players came to France. They set up there a permanent theatre, and, when there came into the *commedia dell' arte* a certain infusion of literature, French authors did not hesitate to work out plays for them. *Le Théâtre Italien* prepared by Gherardi has preserved many of these dramas. As an example we may take *L'Opéra de Campagne* (1692) in which part of the story is told in written dialogue; on reaching the fourth scene, however, this dialogue breaks down. It is a scene between Octave and Arlequin and is, according to the author,

> une des plus plaisantes de toute la Comédie, mais c'est une de celles qui ne se peuvent exprimer, & qui n'auroient point d'agrément sur le papier. En un mot, c'est ce qu'on appelle Scéne Italienne, Scene jouée sur le champ, sans rien apprendre par cœur, & qui dépend entiérement du genie & de l'esprit de l'Acteur. Arlequin contrefait tout ce qu'il a vû, & dit à Octave le dessein qu'il a de faire executer un Opera chez Madame Prenelle, & que par le moyen d'une certaine Colombine qui en est une Actrice, il pretend faire reussir son mariage avec Therese.

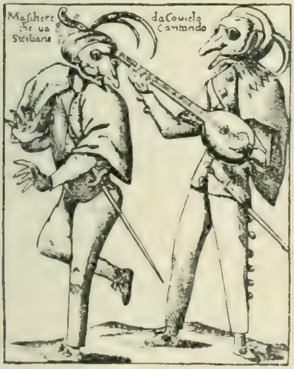

Fig. 124. Coviello, Sixteenth Century

From Duchartre, *op. cit.*

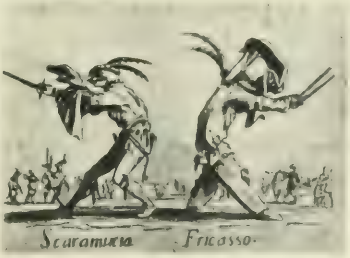

Fig. 125. Scaramucia and Fricasso. Design by Callot

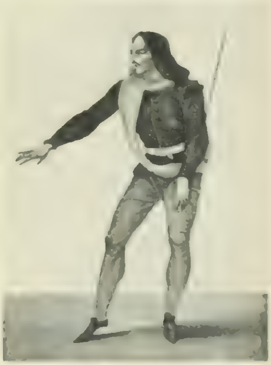
Fig. 126. Scaramouch

From Duchartre, *op. cit.*

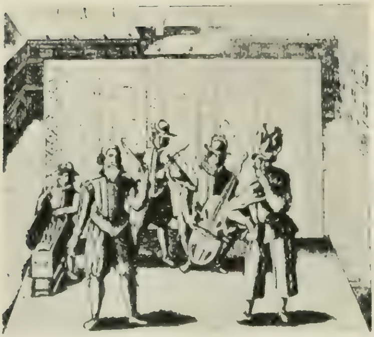

Fig. 127. AN ITALIAN PLATFORM STAGE

From Duchartre, *op. cit.*

Octave applaudit à tout, & dit qu'il a parlé à Jeannot, qui luy a promis monts & merveilles. Là-dessus Jeannot arrive.[1]

This may serve, perhaps, as a specimen of a *scenario.*

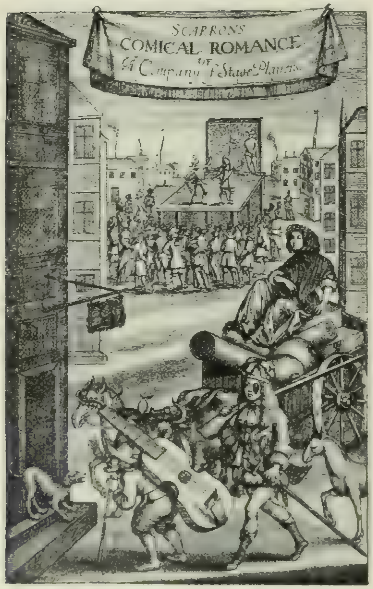

Fig. 128. A PLATFORM STAGE AND ITINERANT PLAYERS IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

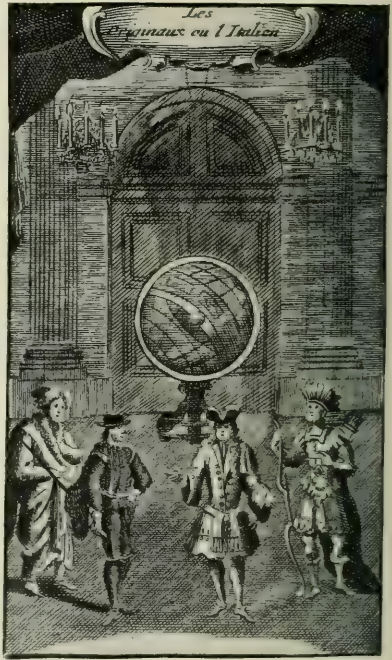

Fig. 129. FRONTISPIECE TO "LES ORIGINAUX OU L'ITALIEN" IN "LE THÉÂTRE ITALIEN" (1721)

This and Fig. 131 suggest the permanent setting shown more clearly in Fig. 176.

On the Continent the traditions of the *commedia dell' arte* were kept alive until the middle of the eighteenth century, until, indeed, the opposition of Goldoni brought ruin to the improvised stage. Thereafter only vague relics of its activity persisted.

To England the Italian comedians came in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They were popular in London during the Restoration. In the eighteenth century they played for months together in one of the smaller theatres. Then a curious thing happened. They became dumb. It is said that Rich, who, imitating the Italian players, was an excellent Harlequin, finding that he could not speak so well as he could act, turned to dumb show; but, whatever the reason, the traditions of the *commedia dell' arte* passed in England into the pantomime. *Harlequin Dr Faustus*, *Harlequin Mungo*, *Harlequin Necromancer*—the titles meet us on page after page of eighteenth-century newspapers, and the pantomimic movement, thus started, was carried over to the nineteenth century. It is dying away only in our own days, Christmas laughter rousing annually the palsied limbs to action.

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[1] "[This scene is] one of the most delightful in the whole comedy, but is one of those which cannot be expressed in print and has no value when written down. In a word, it is of the type called 'Italian Scene,' a scene improvised, without any memorizing of words, depending wholly on the genius and spirit of the actor. Arlequin recounts in dumb show all he has seen, and tells Octave of his design of having an Opera performed at Madame Prenelle's house. He thinks that with the aid of a certain Colombine, who is an actress in it, he will be able to arrange Octave's marriage with Therèse. Octave agrees to everything, and says that he has spoken to Jeannot, who has promised him countless things. At this point Jeannot arrives." The French text is from *Le Théâtre Italien* (1721).

(vii) The Theatres of the Commedia dell' arte

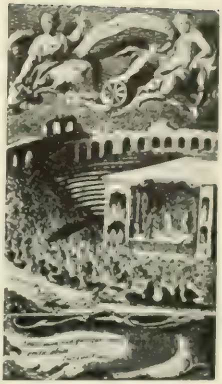


Fig. 130. Teatro S. Carlino

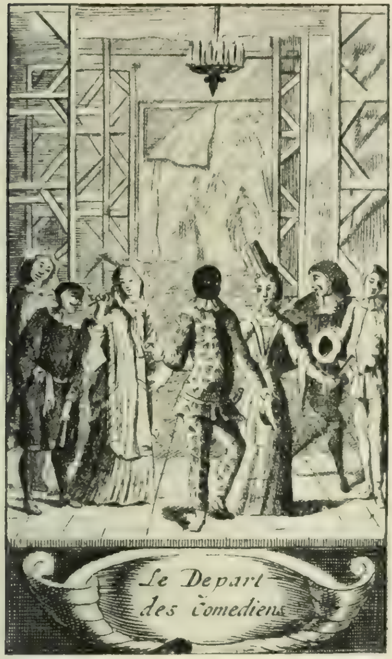
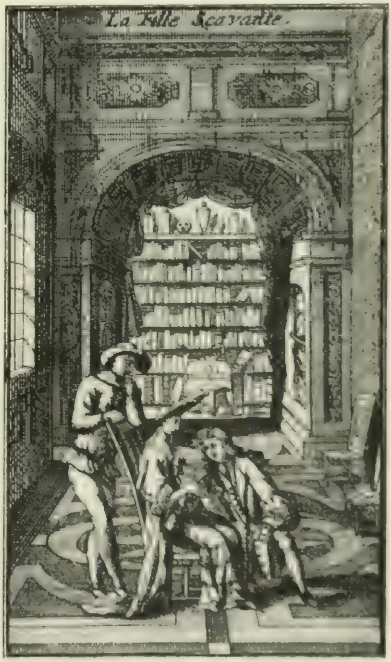


Fig. 131. Frontispiece to "Le Départ des Comédiens" in "Le Théâtre Italien" (1721)

This shows the frames of the side-wings; the audience is supposed to be back stage.

Finally, before we dismiss the actors of the improvised comedy, a word must be said of their theatres. It is not that these actors introduced anything new, but simply that we must place on record the types of stages which they used. One was the outdoor platform. It is the stage of the French *théâtre de foire*, a bare platform backed by a piece of undecorated back-cloth (see Figs. 64, 65). Sometimes more elaborate outdoor theatres were devised, as that shown in Figs. 127 and 128. Generally, however, the acting place was a typical theatre of the Renascence period with a conventional street setting and, in addition, wonderful changes and transformation scenes. Many of the more decorative effects are shown in the frontispiece to Gherardi's *Le Théâtre Italien*, and, making all allowance for the imagination of the artist, we must realize that spectacle here, as in the opera, played a large part. Sometimes the scene shows a simple archway changed for various scenes by the introduction of back-cloths or of movable properties as in Fig. 129; sometimes it is more ornate as in Fig. 132; sometimes it actually shows the secrets of the setting itself, with frames and canvas and side-wings (Fig. 131). In various ways the *concertatori* of the company aimed at novelty, now securing wonderful effects, now no doubt presenting to their audience scenes which would seem to a modern audience meagre and primitive enough.



La Fille Sçavante.

Fig. 132. Frontispiece to "La Fille Sçavante" in "Le Théâtre Italien" (1721)

CHAPTER VI

SCENIC DESIGN IN FRANCE (BEFORE 1650)

AT an early date the Italian Renascence penetrated to France, and there, as in its native home, it aroused men to revive the masterpieces of classic drama and so to think of a new stage. At first no doubt the efforts were sufficiently crude, and, in all probability, merely followed along the lines laid down, at Rome and at Ferrara, by Serlio, Palladio, and the rest. A French Terence published in 1552 shows a theatre much of the style familiar to us, save that no curtains divide the pillars at the rear and that those actors who are not speaking apparently sit at the back. In 1561 J. C. Scaliger had noted that the plays acted in France had the peculiar convention that "qui silent pro absentibus habentur."[1] Shortly after, Serlian ideals must have entered in, and no doubt efforts were made after his model. Unfortunately very little information concerning the earlier period has come down to us, and we must note that only one theatre existed which was open to the public. The history of this playhouse is an interesting one. It dates back to December 4, 1402, when the Confrérie de la Passion was given permission "de faire et jouer quelque Misterre que ce soit."[2] On November 17, 1548, this company was formally forbidden to play any "mystères sacrez" but were allowed to perform "autres mystères profanes." The Confrérie, on thus being permitted to produce secular works, converted into a theatre a long rectangular hall in the Hôtel de Bourgogne, situated at the corner of Rue Mauconseil and of Rue Française. Up to 1598 they played there regularly, the theatre once more in 1608 passing into their hands when they were exalted in position by becoming Comédiens du Roi.

It is with the work of these Comédiens du Roi that we are most concerned, for, if little information has been preserved concerning the earlier history of staging in France, ample opportunity for studying the later methods is provided by a *Mémoire pour la Décoration des Pièces qui se représentent par les Comédiens du Roy, entretenus de sa Magesté*, in other words a series of notes and sketches indicating the settings and properties necessary for a number of plays produced by them between 1633 and 1678. The date is late, but the earlier designs are so obviously primitive that we may feel assured they represent in all essentials the settings of the first quarter of the century as well. The chief artist concerned was Laurent Mahelot, and the interest of the volume lies in the fact that both comments and sketches show that the materials preserved were of a highly practical nature. The general style of the *mise-en-scène* presents something to us which is decidedly different from the efforts of the Italians. It borrows from Serlio undoubtedly, but the methods employed are, in the majority of instances, far removed from his. Occasionally we find a scene *tout en pastoralle* in his satyric strain; occasionally a street- or palace-setting reminds us irresistibly of his tragic and comic designs; but generally the devices employed carry us far from the unity striven after by Renascence theorists and practicians. In general outline, this *décor simultané* or multiple scenery may be described as the placing on the stage of as many 'localities' as the action of the drama required. We are dealing, we must remember, with a type of play which is so far 'romantic' that it disregards the unity of place, that it introduces [illegible]erent localities in different scenes. It is obvious that such a play can be presented in the theatre in three ways and in three ways only: (1) by the use of curtains, the imagination of the audience creating the surroundings; (2) by the use of changing scenery; and (3) by the use of the *décor simultané*.[1] It was the last which Mahelot adopted. A typical example may serve to make the principle clearer. The design shown in Fig. 133 is that executed for the play of *Pandoſte*, written on the same theme as that which is used in *The Winter's Tale*. Whereas in Shakespeare's drama the scenes pass from Leontes' palace to Bohemian plains and wild sea-coaſts, the French director places everything upon the ſtage at once. To the left of the audience is a painted sea; immediately behind it appears the Temple of Delphi. The back of the ſtage is occupied by the Palace of Epirus, while the right-hand side contains a prison. In all probability the representations of these various *maisons* or *case* were in relief, Serlio-wise, conſtructed of frames of wood covered with painted canvas, and some at leaſt were practicable. "Une feneſtre où se donne une lettre" and "une tour, une corde nouée pour descendre de la tour, un pont-levis qui se lâche quand il eſt nécessaire"[2] prove that the "houses" were not merely symbolic. All sorts of buildings and of scenes were set on the ſtage in this manner, and there were even rooms, no doubt with a "fourth wall" knocked away. One "belle chambre" has in it "une table, deux tabourets, une écritoire." Quite clearly we are here at the meeting point of classic and romantic, or, to be more precise, of medieval and Renascence. We are near the ſtationary settings of the mysteries, yet we are in touch with Italian ideas. "Une perspective" is spoken of "où il y ait deux passages entre les deux maisons,"[3] and the very word tells its own ſtory.

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[1] "Those who are silent are taken to be [illegible]he stage."

[2] "To make and play whatever Mystery they care."

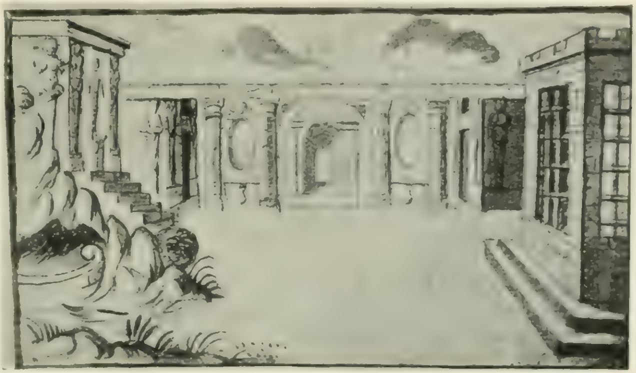

Fig. 133. A Setting for "Pandoste" at the Hôtel de Bourgogne

At the prompt side are the sea and the Temple of Delphi; back ſtage is the Palace of Epirus; at the actor's left is a prison.

The importance of Mahelot's designs cannot be overstated. They are invaluable documents for the ſtudy, not only of French, but of English theatrical endeavour. In dealing with the ſtaging at Court in London during the sixteenth century, or with the settings indulged in by the boy companies, we muſt ever bear these in mind.

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[1] In dealing with French and English theatres of this time we must be careful to note the 'romantic' tendency of some of the dramas of those countries in contradistinction to the 'classic' tendency in Italy. The romantic dramatists were innocent of rules, and although a Sidney might ridicule their efforts, although a Cervantes might enquire "Que major disparate puede ser en el sugeto que tratamos, que salir un niño en mantillas en la primera escena del primier acto, y en la segunda salir ya echo hombre barbado?" the audiences made no such comments or queries, and demanded that all should be represented on the ſtage.

[2] "A window from which a letter is handed out; a tower, a knotted cord for descending from the tower, a drawbridge which can be lowered when necessary."

[3] "Where there are two passages between the two houses."

CHAPTER VII

THEATRES OF ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND (TO 1642)

(i) General Considerations

IN tracing the development of the theatre in Italy and France we have discovered certain clearly marked types of setting. (1) First, the curtained hall with a simple raised daïs, as in French farce, with, as a variety of this, the *théâtres de foire*, where a raised platform is terminated by a simple back-cloth painted in perspective. (2) The monumental and permanent façade as presented in Palladio's Teatro Olimpico, with streets running down toward the stage proper, five entrances being provided for the actors. (3) The formal designs for comedy, tragedy, and satyric play as planned by Serlio. (4) The *décor simultané* as used at the Hôtel de Bourgogne. (5) The fusion of Palladian and Serlian features as in the Teatro Farnese at Parma, with the elaboration of devices for the shifting of scenery. Clearly, several of these types of staging carry us well into the seventeenth century, but we shall now have to return to the century preceding to deal with what is one of the most interesting and important of all European theatrical developments.

No more than with Italian theatres, however, can we treat the Elizabethan stage as a whole. The first public theatre was opened in 1576, but long before that date elaborate shows had been given at Court, while from 1576 to 1642 is a space of nearly three-quarters of a century. It would, of course, be most advantageous to trace the genesis and slow forward movement of the English theatre chronologically, but that might occupy more space than can conveniently be devoted to the subject here; and as a consequence we shall fall back once more on categorical divisions and deal with each as a separate entity. Some five tendencies or types of setting we can trace in London during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. (1) First there is the hall stage used by the interlude players. (2) Following this there comes the court show of the sixteenth century, with which may be taken the theatres used by the boy-players under Lyly and his companions. (3) Next we come to the public stage proper, typified in the large open-air Globe playhouse. (4) Besides these, however, the public companies used, in the seventeenth century, 'private' theatres such as that at Blackfriars, while (5) there are the masques presented at Court under James I and Charles I, ever increasing in splendour and in artistry, till we reach the closing of the theatres in 1642. While there was a considerable give and take among these theatres, each stands by itself as representative of a special ideal in stage setting.

(ii) The Hall Stages

The halls used for the interludes need not detain us for long. Already something has been said of this type of playhouse,[1] and it must be noted that the traditions established in the medieval period itself were extended well to the end of the sixteenth century. Usually all that the actors had here was a slightly raised platform, with, perhaps, a back-curtain or arras through which the performers could enter or leave the primitive stage. That is to say, conditions were almost identical with those of the plain-curtained French hall dealt with in a preceding chapter.[2] The interludes as a whole display practically no change of scene and certainly make but few demands on the scenic-artist, machinist, or 'actor-manager.' For the most part they are but simple one-act playlets with many reminiscences of the medieval poetic *débat*, the characters being few in number and rarely more than two speaking parts being presented at one time. It is just possible, however, that for some there may have been arranged partitions at the back, similar to those early woodcuts in Terence, which were imaginatively given to different localities. We have already seen that *Thersytes* suggests an arrangement of this type and others hint at a similar *mise-en-scène*. The stage directions, however, are slight, and we can make no certain deductions from them.

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[1] *Supra*, p. 73.

[2] *Supra*, p. 115.

(iii) STAGING AT COURT AND AT THE UNIVERSITIES

While still in the hazy realm of conjecture, we move on to somewhat surer ground when we pass to the Court shows of this period, for here we possess the invaluable Revels' Office accounts so ably edited and commented upon by Professor Feuillerat. We have, unfortunately, no actual pictorial representation of any setting of this time, but we may, by the exercise of our imagination, conjure up some kind of picture of the manner in which plays were performed. The accounts tabulate the necessary materials for a variety of stage purposes, but on two sets of items alone our attention must be centred. These are the various requirements for "houses" and the canvas for "great cloths." We learn in these accounts of "sparres to make frames for the players howses," of "canvas to cover diuers townes and howses and other devisses and clowds," of "hoopes for tharbour [the arbor] and topp of an howse," and of "nayles to strayne the canvas." Evidently then these were buildings of the Serlian style, made of laths, covered with painted canvas, and surmounted with fitting tops. The number of "houses" used for each particular play seems to have varied from two to five or six. A house and a battlement served for many dramas, but we hear of more for others. Apparently these "houses" were made to represent various objects. The ordinary dwelling-house is there, but besides that there is a "Pallace," "a gret Castell," battlements innumerable, cities, mountains, and similar *mansions*—all recalling the multiple settings employed at the Hôtel de Bourgogne and no doubt being inspired by the stage-manager's efforts there. Sometimes, perhaps, the houses were arranged in a Serlian manner, but more probably they were grouped, French fashion, about the stage with little thought of the laws of perspective. As far as can be judged the authors were not over-careful of the exacter rules insisted upon by their Italian predecessors and contemporaries. Thus, in *Patient Grissell* there is the city of Salucio showing Gautier's house, Janickell's cottage, and that of Mother Apleyarde, besides the city of Bullin Lagras showing the house of the Countess of Pango. Foreshortening is here as it is in the medieval theatre. In the same way a Forest with Bryan Sans Foy's castle and a prison must have stood on one side of the setting for *Clyomon and Clamydes*, the other side being occupied by the Isle of Strange Marshes. It is possible, too, that in some instances doors may have been used with labels indicating the locality they were supposed to represent. The wood and Phrygia in *Common Conditions* seem to have been indicated in this way, while in *Jocasta* we read of "the gates called Electrae" and "the gates called Homoloydes." It seems that the same device was known in France, and possibly was derived from medieval practice. So far, then, we have found ourselves on thoroughly familiar ground.

Some little trouble, however, is caused by the references in the Revels' Office accounts to "curteynes," sometimes called "greate curteynes," along with the poles and "ringes" which raised or lowered them. From the indications which are preserved we cannot tell whether these were front curtains or merely coverings for the houses; nor can we say whether the "great cloths" are curtains at all or perspectively painted back-cloths after the Serlian manner. It is noticeable, however, in this connexion that all the references in the accounts point, not to a curtain which rises or falls, but to a curtain which is " drawn " by means of " lynes " and " ringes." That it was used sometimes at least in a front position seems proved by Wilmot's line in *Tancred and Gismund*:

> Now draw the curtens for our Scaene is done,

and by the lines attributed to Sir Walter Raleigh:

> Our graues, that hyde vs from the all-seeing sun,
> Are but drawne curtaynes when the play is done.

In addition to the use of " houses," of course, the Revels' officers made free use of practicable furniture. Chairs, thrones, woods, rocks, wells, caves there are in plenty. Aqua-vitae, as in Italy, provided conflagration effects, and the Elizabethans knew as well as Serlio how to make thunder and lightning.

This method of staging plays by means of multiple scenery with the occasional introduction of perspective—for " the chiefe busynes of the " Revels' Office was to have " skill of deuise " and " iudgment . . . in sight of perspective and architecture "—was, as is natural, adopted both by courtly amateurs and by those companies of choir-boys who, of all actors, were most closely associated with the Court. The practice of the *décor simultané* is referred to clearly in the " magnifica palatia aedesque apparatissimae "[1] mentioned at Oxford in 1566; it is dominant over the performances at the Inns of Court; it flourished at Blackfriars under Lyly and his companions. In *Campaspe* (1584) we find three houses, a palace for Alexander, a tub for Diogenes, and a shop for Apelles, and this principle, sometimes with the adoption of a Serlioesque satyric scene or comedy scene, and frequently with considerable foreshortening made necessary by the romantic freedom which was ever associated with English drama, is carried through to the end. In William Percy's *The Faery Pastorall* (early seventeenth century) we read that " the Properties " required are

> Highest, aloft, and on the Top of the Musick Tree the Title The Faery Pastorall, Beneath him pind on Post of the Tree The Scene Elvida Forrest. Lowest of all over the Canopie *ΝΑΠΑΙΤΒΟΔΑΙΟΝ* or Faery Chappell. A Kiln of Brick. A Fowen Cott. A Hollowe Oake with vice of wood to shutt to. A Lowe well with Roape and Pullye. A Fourme of Turves. A greene Bank being Pillowe to the Hed but. Lastly A Hole to creepe in and out. Now if so be that the Properties of any These, that be outward, will not serve the turne by reason of concourse of the People on the Stage, Then you may omitt the sayd Properties which be outward and supplye their Places with their Nuncupations onely in Text Letters—

another indication of the use of title-boards on the Elizabethan stage.

(iv) THE PUBLIC THEATRES

The regular companies of actors, however, have now to be considered. These companies, who had taken the place of the amateur performers of medieval times, and who were rapidly ousting both the courtly amateurs and the choir-boys, sometimes acted before Elizabeth, but their regular field of exercise was among the general populace. As is well known, the authorities looked with suspicious eyes at them and at their dramas. Without daring to suggest that the Queen might limit her attendances at comedy or at pageant, they pointed out that public playhouses (originally converted inn-yards) (1) increased the danger of infection in plague years, (2) kept apprentices away from work, and (3) frequently provided opportunity for the devil's work in the way of immorality. It was because of these criticisms, accompanied by galling reſtraints, that the first public theatres were built outside the bounds of the City proper, so that the London magiſtrates might have no direct influence upon their activities. The initial playhouse, The Theatre, built by Burbage, was erected near Shoreditch in a locality which had for long been given over to popular games and amusements. Later, the centre of theatrical gravity moved to the south bank of the river, where, in Southwark, was built the famous playhouse called the Globe, the home of Shakespeare's company. Various early panoramic maps show us the locality and the external appearance of this and of other theatres built in its immediate vicinity. That reproduced in *British Drama* shows the Swan (to the extreme left), the Hope (in the centre), and the Globe (to the right). Evidently, from this and other views, the laſt-mentioned was octagonal outside and possessed a turret rising from one side of the thatched roof. What, however, of the interior? Unfortunately, here we have no such carefully prepared prints to guide us, although we do possess some fairly reliable evidence on the main points. This evidence may be rapidly summarized. (1) There is the de Witt drawing of the Swan theatre, preserved for us at second-hand and not necessarily entirely exact. (2) There are other prints of slightly later date, those which form the frontispieces to Alabaſter's *Roxana* (1632) and Richards' *Messallina* (1640) respectively, together with the much later "Red Bull" drawing prefixed to Kirkham's *The Wits* (1672). (3) There is the description of the Fortune playhouse, with other information, contained in the Alleyn papers and in Henslowe's diary (4) Finally there is the evidence to be derived from a ſtudy of the ſtage directions themselves.

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[1] " Magnificent palaces and beautifully appointed houses."

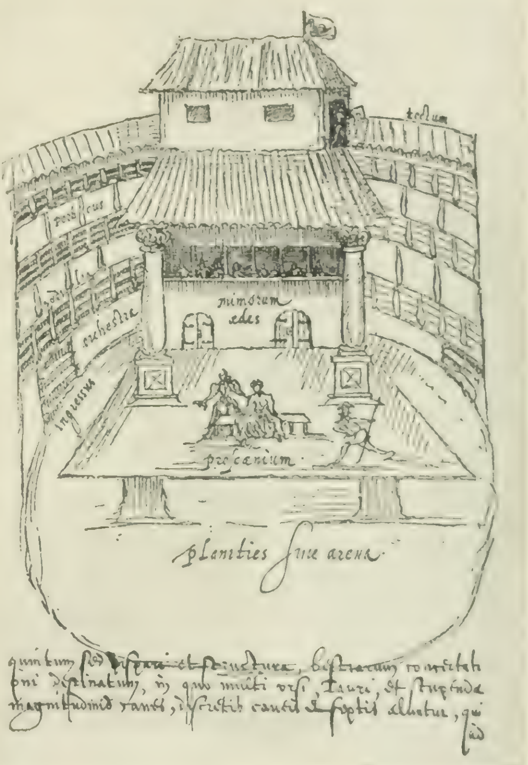

Fig. 134. The Swan Theatre

Perhaps it may be well to outline the main features of points (1) and (3), later comparing them with evidence collected from other quarters. In the Swan drawing (Fig. 134) an open platform stage juts out into the auditorium; behind is a wall with two doors; and over part of the stage projects a roof supported by a couple of pillars. Three galleries run round the sides of what seems to be a circular auditorium. One of these galleries is continued to the back of the stage, and spectators seem to be sitting there. De Witt has evidently attempted to indicate those portions of the theatre which accorded with a Roman playhouse; over the 'pit' he has written—*planities sive arena* (plain or arena), over the ſtage—*proscaenium*, over the back wall *mimorum aedes* (the tiring house), along the galleries *orchestra.* The roof, the seats, and the *porticus* do not concern us. In addition he has added some observations on the London which he viewed:

> Amphiteatra Londinij sunt iv visendae pulcritudinis quae a diversis intersigniis diuersa nomina sortiuntur: in iis varia quotidie scaena populo exhibetur. . . . Theatrorum autem omnium prestantissimum est et amplissimum id cujus intersignium est cygnus . . . quippe quod tres mille homines in sedilibus admittat, constructum ex coaceruato lapide . . . ligneis suffultum columnis quae ob illitum marmoreum colorem, nasutissimos quoque fallere possent. Cuius quidem formam quod Romani operis vmbram videatur exprimere supra adpinxi.[1]

De Witt was a Continental visitor and by way of being a scholar, and his account, apart from the drawing, has thus special value. Other records accord with his. Already in 1577 we are informed of "the sumptuous theatre houses"; in 1578 is a reference to "the gorgeous playing place." In 1600 a foreigner was describing the "theatrum ad morem antiquorum Romanorum constructum ex lignis."[2] Evidently what struck the onlookers was the "sumptuous" appearance of the theatres and their likeness to Roman models.

Let us now turn to the original indenture regarding the Fortune. Here we learn the following particulars:

(1) the "frame" of the playhouse is "to be sett square"; 80 feet each way outside and 55 feet each way within.
(2) there are to be three stories, the first 12 feet high, the second 11 feet high, and the third 9 feet high, the width of each being 12 feet 6 inches.
(3) "ffower convenient divisions for gentlemens roomes" as well as *2d.* rooms are to be provided.
(4) a stage and tiring house are to be set up with "a shadowe or cover over the saide Stadge"; the stage to be 43 feet long and extending to "the middle of the yarde."
(5) the stage is "to be paled in belowe with good, stronge and sufficyent new oken bourdes" and the lower story is to be similarly "paled in" and also provided "with strong yron pykes."
(6) there are to be "windowes and lightes glazed to" the tiring house, and the roof is to be tiled.
(7) everything is to be done as in the Globe theatre save that the "posts" of the frame and stage are to be "square and wroughte palasterwise, with carved proporcions called Satiers to be placed & sett on the topp of every of the same postes."

The indications given here may well be compared with those presented by the de Witt drawing, and in addition we may take at least two of the other sketches. The gallery over the stage divided into rooms is clearly shown in the *Roxana* print (Fig. 135), but here curtains hide the back wall of the stage as they do in the *Messallina* design (Fig. 136) and in *The Wits* (Fig. 137).[3] It is to be noted that in both the *Roxana* and the *Messallina* prints the stage tapers toward the front, and is protected by low rails.

Turning now to the plays themselves, we find that the stage directions sometimes confirm and sometimes contradict the type of stage indicated in the de Witt drawing. (1) In the first place, we know of *three* doors in the back wall, with perhaps an additional entrance at each side of the stage. Thus in *Patient Grissell* the author bids Urcenze and Onophrio to enter " at seuerall doores, and Farneze in the midst," while there are many directions which indicate entries or exits by the " ends " of the stage. (2) We know that the central aperture at the back was sufficiently wide to make the part behind do service as an inner stage. The directions calling for the use of this inner stage are so numerous and have been discussed so frequently that there is no need to instance any here. (3) From the stage directions we can see that the gallery above the stage was used not only by spectators but by the actors and the musicians as well. The gallery as a whole might represent the walls of a city, or else a single " box " might be a window of a house from which an inmate could address a character standing at the door below. (4) Somewhere below the roof or " shadowe," but above the gallery, there were the " heavens " from which chairs and similar objects could be let down. Already in 1584 Higgins had defined the " heavens " in his *Nomenclator* as " The skies or coûterfeit heauen ouer the stage, from whence some god appeared or spoke."

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[1] "There are four beautiful theatres in London which are distinguished by their signs; in these plays are daily performed in public. . . . Of all these theatres the most outstanding and largest is that distinguished by the sign of the Swan . . . this holds 3000 persons on seats. It is built of stone . . . based on wooden columns which, painted like marble, could cheat the most expert. I have delineated above the shape of this theatre; it is seen to follow the lines of a Roman structure."

[2] "The theatre, built of wood, after the manner of the ancient Romans."

[3] The original print from which the model shown in Fig. 137 was taken is reproduced in *British Drama*, p. 216.

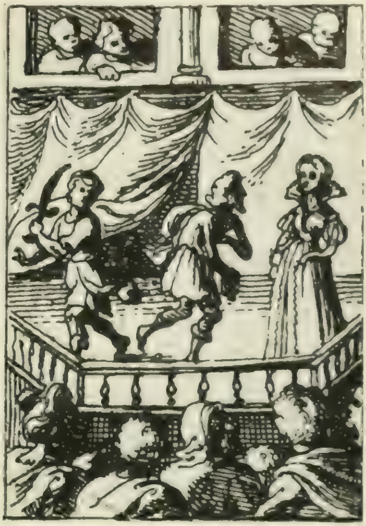

Fig. 135. A Seventeenth Century Stage

From these stage directions, therefore, we have fundamentally to alter our conception of the open-air public playhouse. We must imagine a round or rectangular theatre, set with galleries for the spectators, a large raised stage in the centre of the pit or *orchestra*, backed by a wall, no doubt decorated architecturally with one large and two small openings, perhaps two more doors in side walls, a roof over the stage, supported on elaborately carved and painted pillars, windows above from which spectators may gaze or actors speak (Fig. 138).

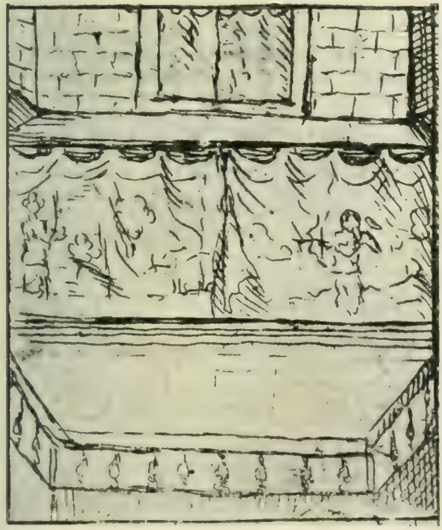

Fig. 136. A Seventeenth-Century Stage

Almost at once a prototype suggests itself, not in the Serlian model, but in the Teatro Olimpico of Palladio. The central doorway and the two doorways to left and right, the entrances, the windows, the architectural adornment, the roof—all recall that playhouse which had become a model for Italy, just as that itself was based on the type of theatre which has been preserved at Orange. There is, too, the circular auditorium to be considered. While that, as many have thought, may have been merely a relic of the bull-baiting ring or of the inn-yard which formed the first theatre, it is possible at least that Burbage, who was no illiterate or inartistic boor, may have been inspired by the example set at Vicenza. If this is so, then the Theatre and the Globe represent attempts to reproduce in London the forms of a Roman playhouse.

It has been suggested by Creizenach that the original model of the English playhouse is to be found in some sixteenth-century Low Country theatres, reproductions of which are extant (Figs. 139 and 140). The print of the stage at Ghent shows five doorways and a roof, while in that at Amsterdam are seen three doorways, a roof, and a kind of gallery. It may be, of course, that James Burbage, before he built the Theatre, had seen these erections, but, it seems to me, a more reasonable explanation exists to account for the similarities between the Dutch and the English playhouses. The Palladian model was one the fame of which passed far beyond Vicenza, and it may well have served to inspire, perhaps at second-hand and by hearsay, both the efforts of the early architects in Ghent and Antwerp and those of James Burbage in London.[1]

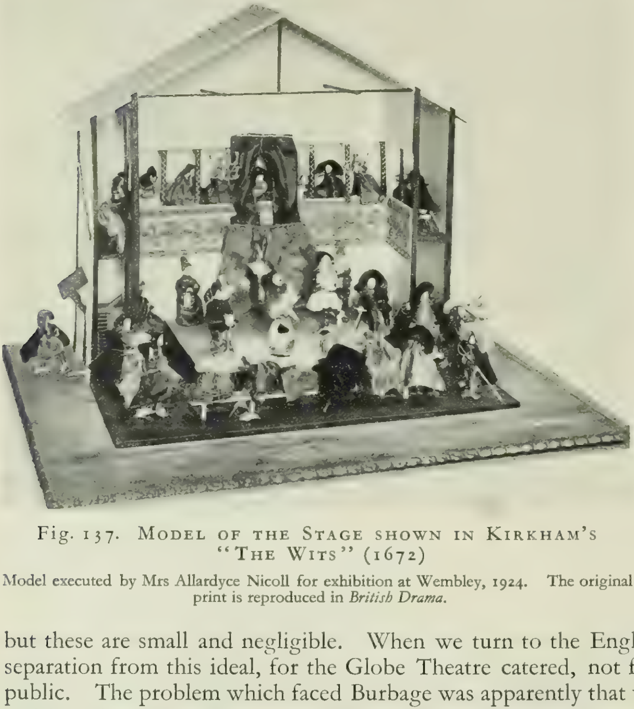

Fig. 137. Model of the Stage shown in Kirkham's "The Wits" (1672)

Model executed by Mrs Allardyce Nicoll for exhibition at Wembley, 1924. The original print is reproduced in *British Drama*.

At the same time, even while we may admit this direct or indirect influence of Renascence Italian stage practice, we find that the type of playhouse exemplified in the Theatre or in the Globe does not in any way accord with the critical ideal which stands behind the Teatro Olimpico. In that theatre the assumption was that the place of action remained unchanged, that the characters in the drama met and talked at a square flanked by divers houses and served by five intersecting streets. There are, it is true, windows above, which might, on occasion, provide another theatrical plane, but these are small and negligible. When we turn to the English playhouse we find a complete separation from this ideal, for the Globe Theatre catered, not for an academic, but for a general public. The problem which faced Burbage was apparently that which had faced Laurent Mahelot, and he solved it in his own way by providing a Palladian 'scene' and at the same time giving himself the opportunity of using an upper stage and an inner stage. Instead of indulging in the multiple setting, he allowed his actors normally to indicate the place of action, but he bowed to 'scenery' in so far that the inner stage, revealed by the central arch, might serve as a room or as a background to a room. Thus, for example, if we are merely told that a certain character lies in his bed, then we overlook the outer part of the stage and concentrate only on what is behind, but if, as in *Romeo and Juliet*, we are informed that "They all but the Nurse goe foorth, casting Rosemary on her and shutting the Curtens," then the inner stage becomes merely part of the large stage and action proceeds on both, so that the inner stage at one time may serve as a separate locality, and at another may form merely the means of localizing the general action of the scene. The curtains, or hangings, over the central aperture, covering what was known technically as the 'scene,' shut off at will this back partition. The device, as will be realized, was an exceedingly clever one, but after all it was but the same 'invention' which was carried out by the architect of the Teatro Farnese at Parma in 1618.[1] A Palladian façade has been provided with a back stage on which 'scenery' of a kind may be shown. The only difference is a difference of theory, not of fact; the English theatre manager allows his actors on occasion to delineate for the audience those settings which would have remained constant with Palladio or which would have been visually represented by the scenic artists of the theatre at Parma.

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[1] It is noticeable that the 'window' or upper stage in the English and Continental theatres is no more than the *διστεγία* of Pollux.

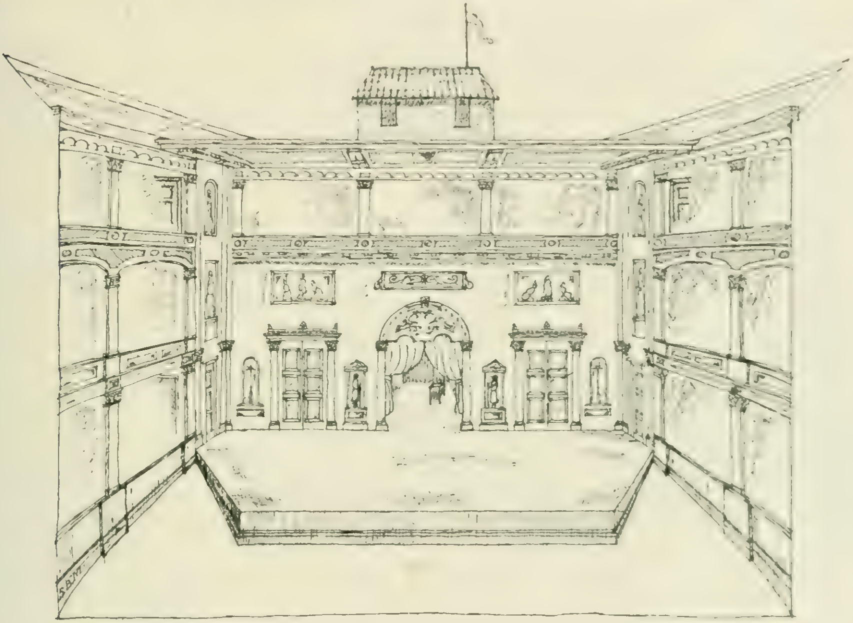

Fig. 138. Reconstruction of an Elizabethan Theatre

Drawn by Mr S. B. Marston with decorations resembling those in the Teatro Olimpico.

In many minor ways the Elizabethan public theatres show their dependence upon the Italian, mingling, as in France, Renascence ideas with medieval. The 'machines' employed may have been relics from the mystery plays, but in many respects they seem to have the impress of the new age upon them. As early as 1546 we have a reference to the use of a *κρίος* or crane so contrived that there "was great wondering, and many vain reports spread abroad of the means how it was effected." This was at Trinity College, but, quite naturally, experiments in classic machines of this type soon spread to the public stages, and we find many instances of the descent of a *deus ex machina*. The ἐκκύκλημα is, of course, suggested by the curtained inner stage, and some means similar to the ἐξώστρα was employed to thrust beds and similar objects on to the stage. Various 'effects' of diverse kinds make their appearance here as in Italy. Trap-doors seem to have been provided in most of the theatres, and through these figures or solid objects could rise or descend. Many a magician's conjuring is contrived by their means. Thunder and lightning, which had been early used at Court, appear in play after play of the period. A "burning Roabe" and a "burning crowne" occur in Heywood's *The Golden Age*, and the companion play, *The Silver Age*, has "Fire-workes all over the house." Reading these and similar stage directions, we are inclined to credit the Elizabethan theatres with many more means at their disposal than is generally allowed them. We can hardly suppose that travelled gentlemen would have refrained from casting a sneer at primitive effects such as many modern critics assume were all the contemporaries of Shakespeare ever knew. The truth is rather that Burbage and his companions, just as Shakespeare himself, were well abreast of the Italians and the French but moving along lines which, springing from an original Continental source, were bearing them to new ideas and fresh experiments.

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[1] If the central aperture is accepted as virtually a proscenium arch, then it is evident that Burbage in England anticipated Italy by nearly half a century. It may be noted here that the word 'proscenium' has moved from an ancient significance—"that which lies before the *skene*"—to indicate the forepart of the stage and even the wall or cloth against which the actors move. See pp. 22, 29-30.

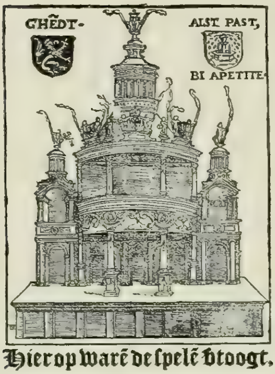
GHẼDT-
ALST PAST,
BI APETITE-
Hierop warẽ de ſpelẽ btoogt.

Fig. 139. THE THEATRE AT GHENT, 1539

From Creizenach, *The English Drama in the Age of Shakespeare.*

(v) THE PRIVATE THEATRES

Besides these public theatres, and apart from the theatres used at an early period by the choir-boys, we have to reckon with the theatres which, for no very clear reason, were designated 'private.' Blackfriars, the winter home of Shakespeare's company, Whitefriars, Salisbury Court, the Cockpit in Drury Lane were thus all private theatres, differentiated from the others mainly by the fact that they were roofed-in rectangular buildings and consequently used artificial light. Evidently, to judge from the *Wits* print and from later examples the main source of illumination came from the candelabra hung over the stage, together with footlights of a primitive sort.

Unfortunately we know practically nothing for certain concerning the shape of the stage in these private theatres, although, as some were exceedingly narrow, we may presume that the stage itself may have filled up all or nearly all the space from side wall to side wall. When we come to the stage directions of the earlier plays produced in these theatres, however, we find much that must interest us, for it is plain that the private houses preserved more of the Serlian tradition or the tradition of the Hôtel de Bourgogne than did the open-air theatre. Many of the dramas, as Sir Edmund Chambers has demonstrated, could have been performed easily by the use of multiple scenery, and it seems clear that these private theatres preserved a tradition, extending from the time of Court performances in the sixteenth century, for more academic and chaster effects. We know that the price of admission to those theatres was higher than that to the public playhouses; we know that the audience was more refined and courtly; and as a result the effects were more nearly allied to those which Revels officers, aided by the services of foreign artists, busied themselves to provide for captious royalty. It was at the private houses of a slightly

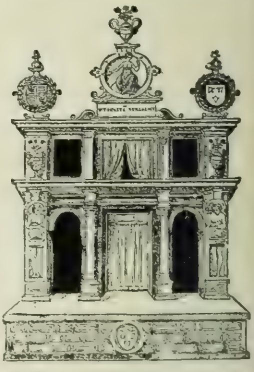

Fig. 140. THE THEATRE AT ANTWERP, 1561

From Creizenach, *op. cit.*

later date that movable scenery was first shown to the general public, but with this we cannot deal until we have glanced at the influence of the Court-masque and the efforts of Inigo Jones. Here be it sufficient to note that the private theatres preserved a "fashion," as Marston expresses it, distinct from that of the public theatres, and intimately connected both with the Serlian set-stage and the *décor simultané*. Painted scenery, such as was employed at Court, may well have been utilized for general purposes, and perspective may have played its part as it did in Italy. In this connexion there is an exceedingly interesting sketch, to which attention has recently been drawn, showing the interior of a theatre. It is included in an English book of the date 1658, a translation from the Dutch.[1] While it may, of course, be Continental in origin, there are one or two minor points which seem to indicate its main features as English. The importance of the design lies in the fact that it shows a simplified multiple setting. On one side is the wall of a house, conventionally arranged; on the other what is evidently intended to be an orchard. At the extreme back of the stage curtains conceal what must be a door or an inner room. Of particular interest, too, is the semblance of theatrical front curtains.

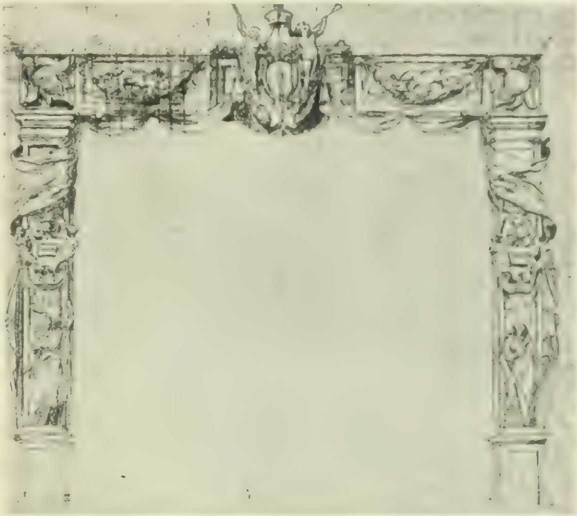

Fig. 141. Frontispiece or Proscenium Arch for "Albion's Triumph" (1609). Design by Inigo Jones

Copyright of the Duke of Devonshire.

(vi) The Masques of the Seventeenth Century

Before we can adequately discuss the problems raised by the settings of later plays in the private theatres, some attention must be given to the masque-settings at the Courts of James I and of Charles I. The earlier shows of this kind, interesting as they undoubtedly are, have not any special value for us here, but those which were produced under Inigo Jones in the seventeenth century have more than an ephemeral importance. It was through them that the English theatre most clearly showed its association with the Continent. Jones was "a great Traveller"; he knew his Italy well, and he knew the work on scenic craft which Italy had produced. He was, however, an experimenter, and his own settings show a desire to attempt various styles before coming to a definite decision. Thus for Daniel's *Vision of Twelve Goddesses*, presented on January 8, 1604, something of an Hôtel de Bourgogne *mise-en-scène* seems to have been employed, while at Oxford in 1605 he used a Serlian raked stage[2] backed by a scenic wall in which were set

> peripetasmata scaenicaque habitacula, machinis ita artificiose ad omnium locorum rerumque varietatem apparata, ut non modo pro singulorum indies spectaculorum, sed etiam pro Scaenarum una eademque fabula diversitate subito (ad stuporem omnium) compareret nova totius theatralis fabricae facies.[3]

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[1] This is reproduced in the present writer's *British Drama*, p. 1[illegible]8.

[2] See *supra*, p. [illegible]

[3] "Tapestries and scene-houses, artfully prepared with machines for a variety of views and devices, so that, not only for separate performances given on different days, but for a single play, new settings of the entire stage were made to appear with a diversity and suddenness that astonished every one." The *peripetasmata* seem to have been canvas-covered *periaktoi*.

In other words, a set of περίακτοι had been established as a back-scene for the changing of the prospect.

From this Jones turned once more to the masque shows at Court. The *periaktoi* he found no doubt a trifle cumbrous, and after all they could show at most but three different views. In principle all his later masque settings demanded an ornate proscenium arch, so that he was adopting or modifying that style of staging which had been popularized by the architects of the Teatro Farnese. This proscenium arch, ornamented with sculptured forms in relief symbolic of the nature of the masque, and containing usually the name of the show in a central compartment, was a most important part of the general scheme, and to the proscenia Jones devoted considerable attention. An example designed for *Albion's Triumph* is given here (Fig. 141). Within this proscenium arch the stage was set, and the full stage might be concealed by a front-curtain, usually painted with a "perspective." In *The Masque of Blackness* (January 1605) such a curtain represented a "landtschap" or landscape and fell at the beginning of the performance, even as the *auleum* had done in Roman theatres and in the early theatres of Ferrara. Later it was made to rise on pulleys in the more modern manner. Being painted, it could not, of course, be drawn like the curtains in the public theatres. In this masque mentioned above Jones seems to have made no attempt to change his scenery, but a sea was simulated Sabbatini-wise, and there were many machinist's effects. A reversion to the *periaktoi* for a turning globe and new cloud effects mark the mask of *Hymenaei* (1606). Little but experimentation in various machines is to be found in the masques which immediately followed, although *The Hue and Cry after Cupid* (1608) presents us with the first definite allusion to a fully developed proscenium arch, and *The Masque of Queens* (1609) shows an elaborate use of the *machina versilis* which changed from an "ugly Hell" to "the House of Fame" and thence to "Fama Bona." After this time Jones seems to have turned to other devices. An elaborate alteration of scene, accompanied by moving lights which dazzled the eyes of the spectators, was presented in Daniel's *Tethys Festival or the Queens Wake* (June 1610), and the effects therein were paralleled in *Oberon, the Fairy Prince* (January 1611). In the latter there is shown first "a darke Rocke, with trees beyond it" (Fig. 142) which changed suddenly to a "*Frontispiece* of a bright and glorious *Palace*," evidently by means of wings drawn off or "opened." This in turn was "opened" once again, and within was shown the Nation of Fays. It is probable that Jones was working here with two-sided flats such as Sabbatini described in his book on stage-craft. It is interesting, too, to note that in *The Lords Masque* (February 1613) there was a device similar to that used in Buontalenti's *intermedii* at Rome, for

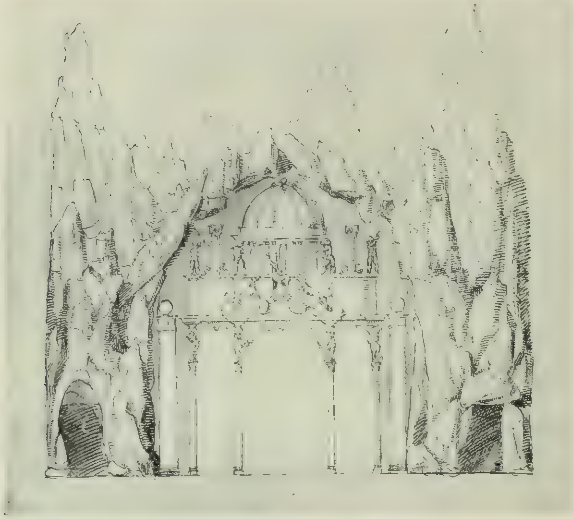

Fig. 142. PALACE AND ROCKS IN "OBERON" (1611). DESIGN BY INIGO JONES

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> from the side of the Scene appeared a bright and transparent Cloud, which reached from the top of the heavens to the earth:– the cloude brake in twain, and one part of it (as with a winde) was blown overthwart the Scaene.

Spectacular shows in heaven and on earth appear plentifully in succeeding masques, but on these we cannot linger. Rather must we concentrate attention on the extremely valuable plans made for *Florimène* in 1635 and for *Salmacida Spolia* in 1640. These reveal at once the methods employed. For the former Jones himself drew out a plan of the hall (Whitehall) and caused his assistant, John Webb, to make a fuller ground-plan of the stage for

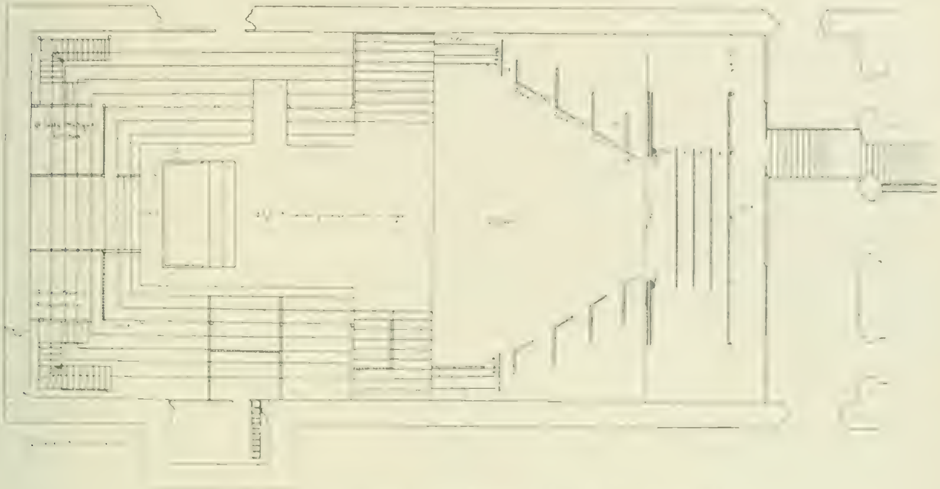

Fig. 143. Plan for "Florimène" (1635), by Inigo Jones

From Reyher, *Les Masques anglais*.

> that kind of sceane with triangular frames on ye sydes where there is but one standing sceane and ye sceane changes only at the Back shutters.

These plans show that the effects were secured by having a series of two-sided flats running at sharp angles toward the back, with, at the rear, four flat shutters changed when required for the *intermedii* (Fig. 143). Fig. 144 shows the general arrangement of the "standing scene" with a view of the Isle of Delos. Clearly from the plan additional use was made of some flats which ran immediately behind the last triangular frame. Thus when the scene had to change to "a snowy Landschipe with leave-lesse trees," then two-side flats of bare trees ran in without meeting, revealing behind a back-cloth, which was thus a "releiue" (relieve) or prospect seen through the rest of the scenery. So the various *intermedii* of the seasons were presented. It is certain that the wings remained unaltered, standing constant amid all the changes in the back cloth.

Finally we reach *Salmacida Spolia* of which also the ground-plan and section have been preserved (Figs. 145 and 146). The former is inscribed:

> Ground platt of a sceane where ye side peeces of ye sceane doe altogether change with ye Back shutters

It is evident that we are dealing here with something entirely different. Four sets of side-wings are placed on each side of the stage, each set consisting of four plain, not two-sided, flats running in grooves. Behind these come a series of four shutters completely cutting off the rear of the stage. These removed, there are revealed the masquers' seats and the perspective beyond. To each set of side-wings and to each of the shutters corresponds a painted sky-cloth, the flats diminishing in height according to the rules of Continental stage designers (Fig. 146). Fig. 147, showing the third scene in this masque, gives a good idea of the arrangement of the setting. The "whole heaven" is illustrated in Fig. 148.

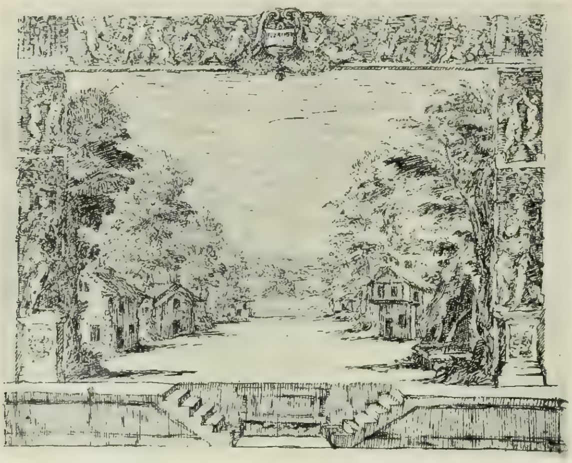

Fig. 144. Standing Scene for "Florimène" (1635). Design by Inigo Jones

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From these plans, designs, and inscriptions it is clear that four types of setting were employed in the masques: (1) the Hôtel de Bourgogne simultaneous scene, (2) the triangular machine or *scaena versilis*, (3) the two-sided and stationary flats with movable shutters at the back, and (4) the completely movable series of flats and shutters—the final evolution of the *scaena ductilis*. It is clear, too, that the order of progression was that indicated above, *Salmacida Spolia* being virtually the last word spoken by Inigo Jones on this subject.

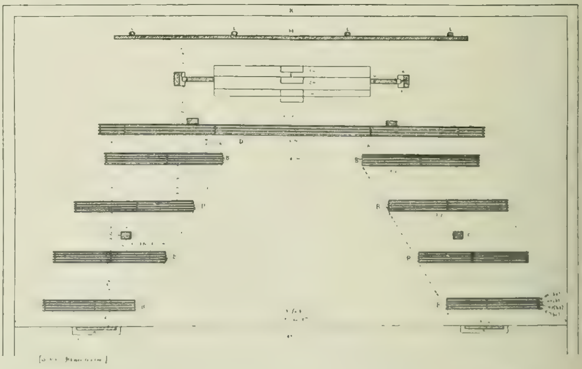

Fig. 145. Plan of the Stage for "Salmacida Spolia" (1640), by Inigo Jones

From Reyher, *op. cit.*

(vii) Scenery in the Theatres

From this rapid and all too brief account of the masques we come to the question which involves a reconsideration of the scenic effects employed in the private theatres. It is almost inconceivable that plays such as *The Tempest* were produced on a bare unadorned stage, and, in point of fact, we do find reason for supposing that there was some give and take between the masque entertainments and the playhouses. The most important document in this connexion is an entry in Anthony à Wood's *History of the University of Oxford.* A play by Cartwright, *The Royal Slave*, had been performed with scenery at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1636. It was so beautiful that the

Queen requested the Chancellor to send her the scenery and the costumes to Hampton Court "that she might see her own Players act it over again." The Chancellor thereupon

> caused the Cloathes and Perspectives of the Stage to be sent to Hampton Court . . . [but] desired of the King and Queen that neither the Play, or Cloaths, nor Stage, might come into the hands and use of the common Players abroad.

Unless the scenery could have been made use of by "the common Players" there does not seem to have been much point in the Chancellor's request.

This whole question, it seems to me, has been hopelessly confused by a failure to differentiate between changing scenery and scenery of a set Serlian plan. When Aubrey declares that Sir John Suckling wrote a play which "had some scenes to it, which in those days (1637) were only used at Masques" he was in all probability thinking of changes and not of scenery as such. It will be well then to consider the evidence for the alteration of scene first and apart from the other. It is thus known that Suckling's *Aglaura* produced at the Blackfriars at Christmas 1637 was so provided with scenes. The "Scene magnificent" was girded at in the prologue to Brome's *Antipodes* (1638), and perhaps the "gaudy scene" of the same writer's *The Court Beggar* (? 1638) is another reference. Furthermore we know that Habington's *The Queene of Arragon* (1640), after being shown at Court, was also given with scenes at the Blackfriars,[1] while D'Avenant in 1639 received a patent to build a theatre where "scenes" could be employed. At the same time as this movement was being established in the theatres the Court came to take an interest in scenery painted for plays as well as for masques. Thus Fletcher's *The Faithful Shepherdess* was presented at Denmark House in January 1634 with scenery, while *Floriméne* was a French pastoral, not a masque. In 1638 Jones sketched plans for Lodowick Carlell's *The Passionate Lovers* as he did in 1640 for Habington's *The Queene of Arragon*. If, then, scenes such as

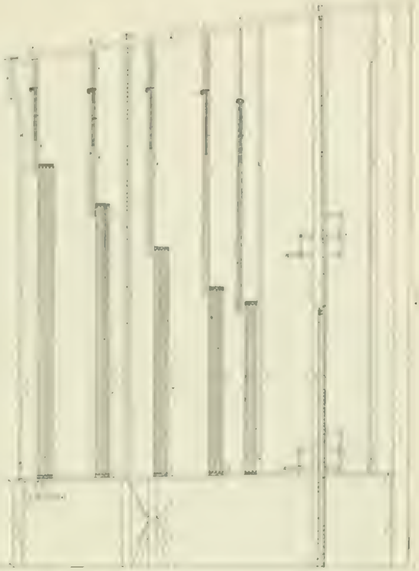

Fig. 146. CROSS-SECTION OF THE STAGE FOR "SALMACIDA SPOLIA" (1640), BY INIGO JONES

From Reyher, *op. cit.*

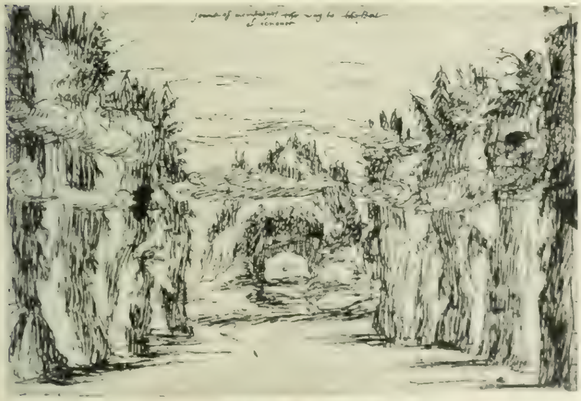

Fig. 147. THE THIRD SCENE IN "SALMACIDA SPOLIA" (1640). DESIGN BY INIGO JONES

Copyright of the Duke of Devonshire.

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[1] Inigo Jones' design for a setting in this play is reproduced in *British Drama*, p. [illegible]. Cp. also Fig. [illegible].

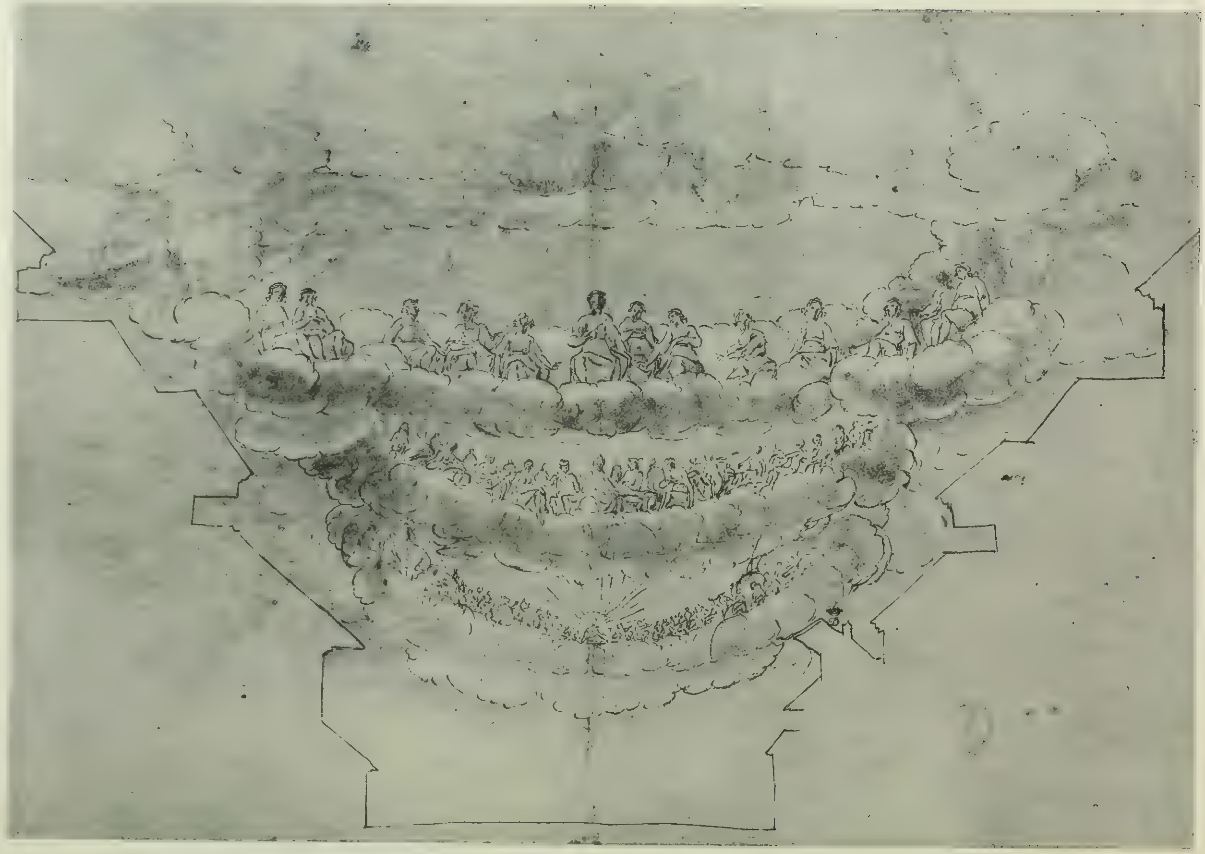

Fig. 148 THE WHOLE HEAVEN IN "SALMACIDA SPOLIA" (1640)

From the original in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire.

Photo Victoria and Albert Museum.

were used at Court could be employed in a private theatre, then surely these private theatres had stages capable of making full use of the effects. In spite of the fact that the utilisation of changing scenery there is recorded as an innovation, it seems that we must presume (1) that the stage was physically capable of accommodating scenery, and (2) that the love of scenery was growing rapidly on the audiences. Even before 1637 we can trace the attention paid to these devices. The prologue to Nabbes' *Hannibal and Scipio*, given at the Phoenix in Drury Lane in 1635, informs us that "the places sometimes chang'd too for the Scene," while at least five plays of the period 1634–36 have stage directions which seem to imply alteration of setting.

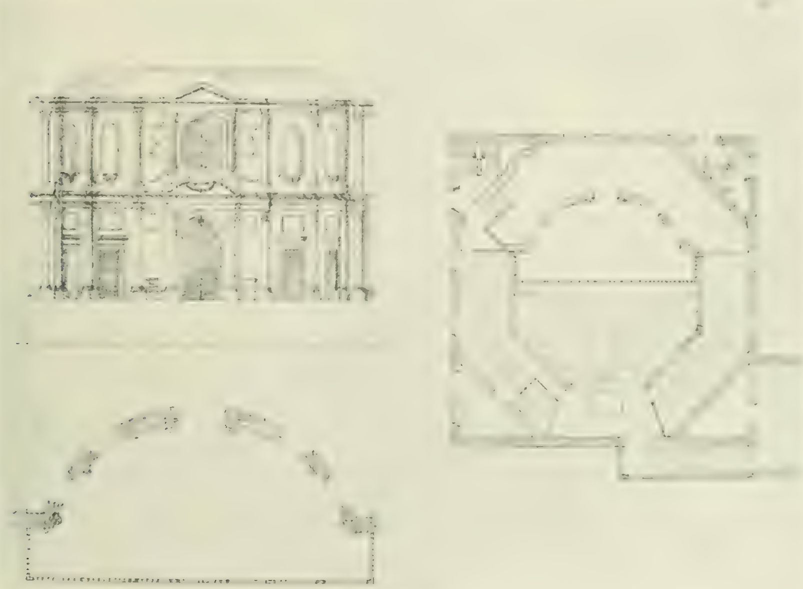

Fig. 149. Plan by Inigo Jones for the Cockpit-in-Court

From the original at Worcester College, Oxford

But, if we assume that changing scenery was employed in the theatres about 1635 and used sporadically on to 1642, we are still left with the question of earlier staging. That, I assume, was more or less of the Serlian type, similar to that used in the public theatres, but no doubt at once more ornate and more academic. It probably took the place of the *décor simultané*, which, as we have seen, was originally used at Court and by the choir boys. That Serlian and Palladian schemes were eagerly thought of in those days is proved by a most interesting set of sketches by Inigo Jones recently discovered. One of these is a plan and elevation conjecturally dated about 1632, which was almost certainly made for the new Cockpit-in-Court (Fig. 149). The arrangement of the seats corresponds to the octagonal setting of the theatre. The stage, 35 feet wide by 16 deep, has a long rectangular front and is backed by a semicircular architectural façade pierced by five doors. Undoubtedly this is but a modification of the Palladian theatre at Vicenza.[1] In connexion with this may be taken another drawing (Fig. 150), even more recently discovered, preserved in Inigo Jones' copy of Palladio. Here the theatre is rectangular, the seats being arranged in concentric curves. The stage is 43 feet wide, and is arranged with two *versurae* or permanent sides and a lofty arch somewhat in the style of the Teatro Farnese. This recedes in the centre and gives way to two side-wings of the usual two-sided sort backed by a perspective. The perspective shown in the elevation is a typical Serlian design. This Serlian design may be compared with the "Tragic Scene" (Fig. 151) of the Chatsworth collection. Evidently Jones was busying himself with plans for some actual theatre, perhaps (may the suggestion be hazarded?) for some private playhouse which thus used a setting which combined a Palladian arch with the scenic device beloved of later audiences. It is remarkable at least that in the sketch for Habington's *The Queene of Arragon* Jones encircled his rough outline of "cloudes," "backcloth," and "citti of releue" with an archway which recalls the archway in the elevation noted above.

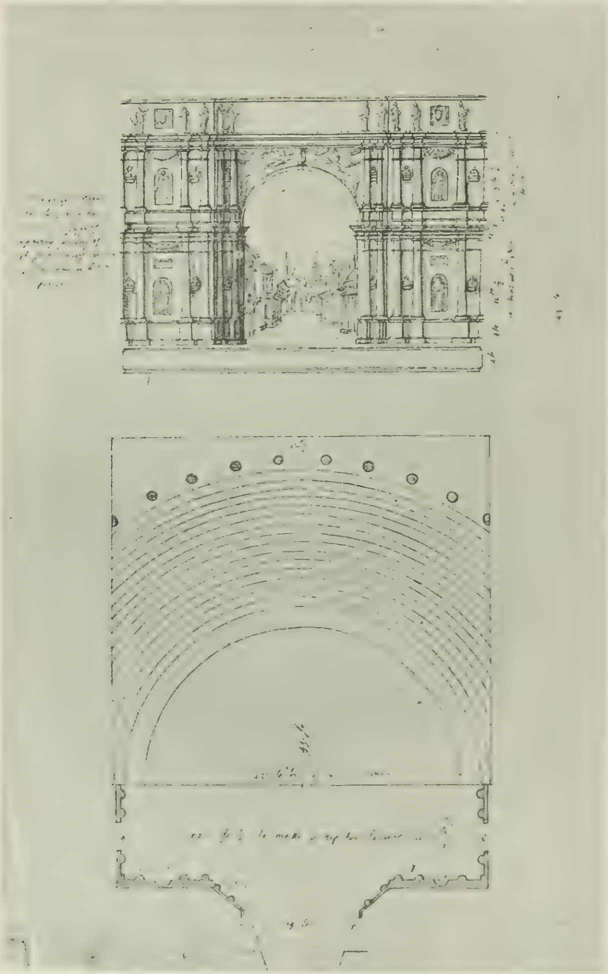

Fig. 150. Theatre Plan by Inigo Jones
From the original at Worcester College, Oxford.

(viii) The Actors, Costumes, and Accessories

So much has been written of the conditions under which Shakespeare wrote that little space need be devoted to that subject here. From being ordinary retainers at the best and "rogues and vagabonds" at the worst, the players slowly won for themselves a position of esteem. Shakespeare could get his coat of arms and a country house at Stratford; Alleyn could leave money to endow an important scholastic centre. Traditions of an earlier time may have clung to such essentially popular houses as the Red Bull, where clownage, squibs, and rant pleased a lower-class public, but at Blackfriars, the Phoenix, and Salisbury Court the actors were gentlemen and the audience critical. Perhaps in the theatres of Shakespeare's time there may occasionally have been noise and tumult—for the Elizabethans were a hot-blooded race—but those who emphasize the rudeness of the gallants upon the stage and the restless clamour of the groundlings seem to me to have misrepresented the conditions of the time. The Elizabethans were still somewhat *naïve*, and obviously looked upon the theatre in a manner entirely different from that of the Restoration courtier. These tales of Italy, these farcical comedies, clearly fascinated them, but I deeply question whether Shakespeare had to contend with those difficulties which later confronted Dryden. As an antidote to the oft-repeated assertions concerning the rude clamour of the multitude let us take a portion of an exceedingly interesting letter written by Orazio Busino to the Council of Venice on December 8, 1617. "To distract me," he says,

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[1] W. G. Keith in an article on *John Webb and the Court Theatre of Charles II* (*Archit. Rev.*, lvii, 339, February 1925) thinks this design was by Webb and made for a reconstruction of the Cockpit after the Restoration. While undoubtedly the plan conflicts with the *Queene of Arragon* design this case does not seem fully proved.

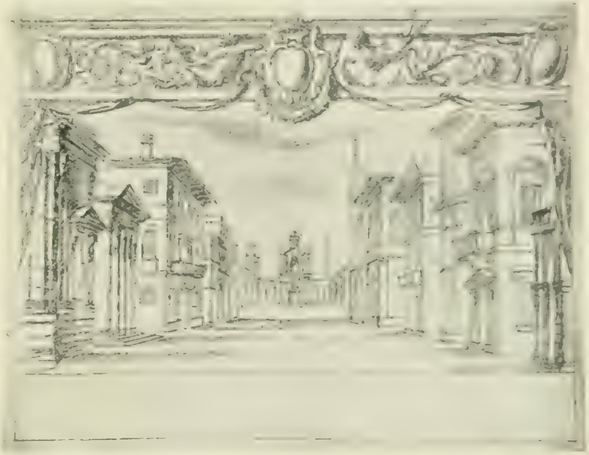

Fig. 151. THE TRAGIC SCENE. DESIGN BY INIGO JONES
Copyright of the Duke of Devonshire.

> they took me at the suggestion of Signore Giovanni Battista Lionello, to one of the numerous theatres here in London where comedies [plays] are recited and we saw a tragedy performed there, which moved me little, especially as I cannot understand a single word of English, though one may derive some little amusement from gazing on the sumptuous dresses of the actors and observing their gestures, and the various interludes of instrumental music, dancing, singing and the like. The best treat was to see and stare at so much nobility in such excellent array that they seemed so many princes, *listening as silently and soberly as possible*.

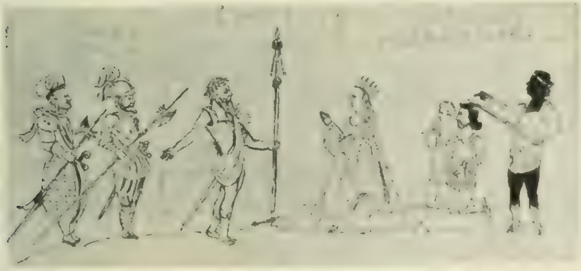

Fig. 152. "TITUS ANDRONICUS" IN 1595
From the original in the possession of the Marquess of Bath.

It is but a thumb-nail sketch of an Elizabethan theatre, but an interesting one. This Italian visitor, like so many other earlier Continental visitors, saw nothing in the theatre so crude as to call for an unfavourable comparison with the theatres of his own land. He thought worthy of record the quiet attention of the audience, and he noted the sumptuous apparel of the actors.

That the players were richly dressed we know from many sources. John Northbrooke in 1577 had girded at the "gorgious and sumptious apparell" to be seen in the theatres. Two years later Stephen Gosson declared that

> Ouerlashing in apparel is so common a fault, that the very hyerlings of some of our players, which stand at reuersion of vi.s. by the weeke, iet vnder gentlemens noses in sutes of silke.

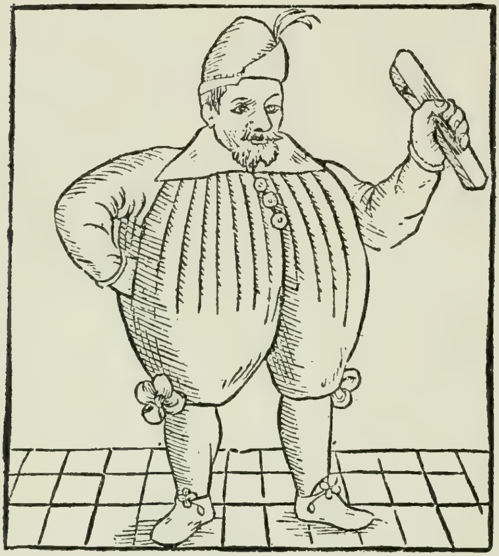

Fig. 153. COSTUME OF THE CHARACTER OF NOBODY

From *Nobody and Somebody* (*c.* 1606).

Unfortunately, although we have many allusions such as these, and although we have some inventories among the Henslowe papers, we possess little sure information concerning the nature of those rich costumes. For many plays certainly the ordinary dress of the time could be used, but often there must have been attempts to secure both a semblance of historical accuracy and something of a symbolic or conventional effect. In a brilliant essay entitled *The Truth of Masks* Oscar Wilde demonstrated with some show of reason that Shakespeare was not so careless in regard to costume as has often been made out, and his case is even stronger now than it was when written. In our survey of the eighteenth century it will be seen that while ordinary costumes were used for many characters, special stage dresses were apportioned (1) to Eastern characters, (2) to Roman and Grecian characters, (3) to special characters outside the usual run of tragedy and comedy.[1] The more we study eighteenth-century theatrical conditions the more we realize that those conditions are largely traditional and consequently that they throw considerable light on the earlier theatre. Thus, while Hamlet invariably wears ordinary dress, Falstaff, Posthumus, Dromio, and others have attires peculiar to themselves, while Othello wears the Eastern garments and Antony the costume *à la romaine*. An interesting commentary on these garments is provided by a drawing of 1595, showing a scene from *Titus Andronicus* (Fig. 152). Tamora wears the ordinary crown of the tragedy queen (*cf.* Figs. 235 and 239). The two retainers have, apparently, Elizabethan doublets with some kind of breastplate—the costume corresponding with eighteenth-century

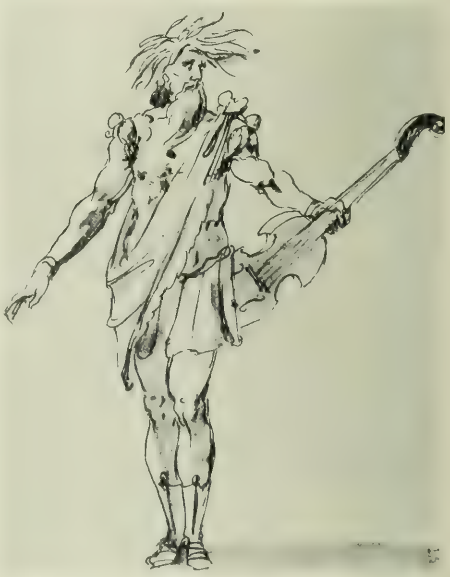

Fig. 154. THE COSTUME OF FLOODS IN "CHLORIDIA" (1631). DESIGN BY INIGO JONES

Copyright of the Duke of Devonshire.

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[1] *Infra*, p. 178. For more detailed notes on the dressing of actors on the Elizabethan stage see Appendix A.

Roman dress. One of them, be it noted, sports a helmet with plumes just as later tragic characters do (cp. Fig. 217). Alarbus has a peculiar attire, consisting of a breastplate (?) and a kind of cloak flung over his left shoulder, while Aaron the Moor has tight-fitting boots, doublet (or a tunic ?), and an open-necked shirt. While his dress does not agree with that of later Eastern personages, the boots as well as the curved scimitar of one of the guards well merit our notice.

We must remember too "the robe to go invisible in" which is mentioned in one of Henslowe's inventories. What that robe was we have no means of knowing, but it was without doubt a conventional mantle which the audience would automatically accept. It was used later for Ariel in *The Tempest*, and was probably but one of a series of similar allegorical or symbolic costumes made use of by the actors. We certainly know that a character Nobody in the play of *Nobody and Somebody* was represented with breeches up to his neck so that 'no body' should be visible, and we are aware that other conventional costuming was indulged in. Thus in *Henry IV* the King is shown to us in his bed-chamber, lying there in his night-gown with, rather uncomfortably, his crown on his head.

Without question the rich masque suits, specially designed by Inigo Jones and others, must have had their influence upon the public stage. Perhaps the "common players" may, on occasion, have been able to obtain from the Court some garments which, once used, were regarded as no longer valuable. The design for Floods (Fig. 154) in *Chloridia* (1631) reminds us at once of the kingly figure in the *Titus Andronicus* illustration (Fig. 152), while that of a knight masquer in *Oberon* (Fig. 155) gives an idea of the dress *à la romaine*. Other designs, such as those reproduced in the volume of masque-drawings published by the Malone and Walpole Societies, may well be studied in a similar manner. We may imagine that the actors in the public theatres were togged out in finery, which, if not quite so rich, was of the same general character. Court and theatre, we must remember, were closely bound together in Elizabeth's day; Puritan sentiment drew them even nearer in the times of the Stuarts who followed her.

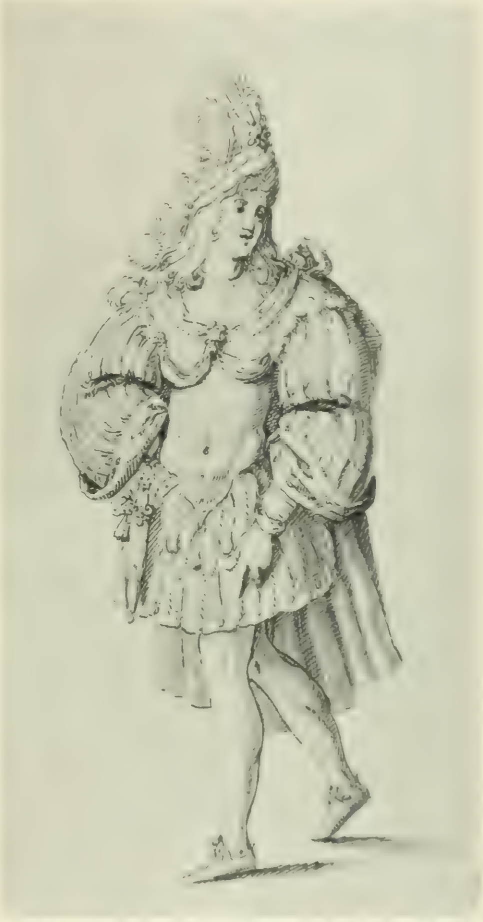

Fig. 155. Costume of a Knight Masquer in "Oberon" (1611). Design by Inigo Jones.

This is a typical example of [illegible] of the seventeenth century.

From the drawing in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire. [illegible]

CHAPTER VIII

THEATRES OF FRANCE AND ITALY (EIGHTEENTH CENTURY)

(i) General Movements

EXPERIMENTATION in scenic design and in theatrical structure did not, of course, cease with Serlio, Sabbatini, and Jones. Constantly France and Italy were endeavouring to achieve something fresh and new, now planning new auditoria, now devising fresh scenic effects. In general we may say that the movement after 1650 was all in the direction of machines and of changing settings. Palladio became out of date, and even Serlio a trifle antiquated. Everything was rendered more gorgeous and more spectacular in spite of that pseudo-classic movement which produced a Racine in Paris and an Addison in London. In the French capital Giacomo Torelli till 1660 worked wonders with his teeming brain, and his place was promptly filled by Gaspare Vigarani, a native of Reggio, who called to his aid the services of his son, Carlo. Under his direction rose the great Salle des Machines, the stage of which was 32 feet wide at the proscenium opening and no less than 132 feet deep. There wonderful effects were secured, the immense size of the stage permitting the use of machines as large as 40 feet wide by 60 feet long. There appeared some of those spectacles which were eagerly copied by English managers of the Restoration.[1] In Italy the Bibienas carried on earlier traditions, evolving richer and richer settings, until by the eighteenth century the theatres had risen to a height of splendour never known before.

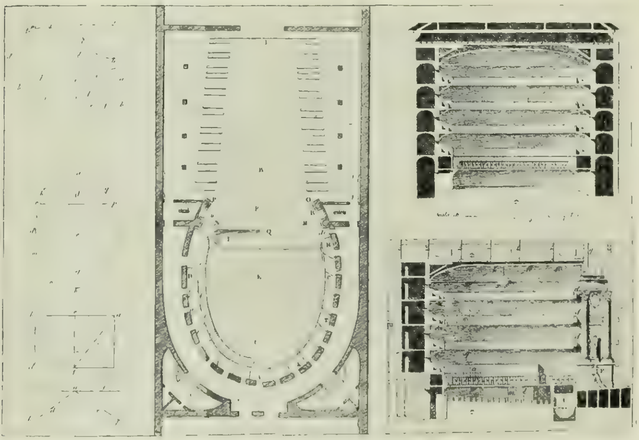

Fig. 156. Plan of a Theatre according to the Principles of Optics and Acoustics

From Patté (1830).

It is impossible here to discuss all the varied aspects of theatrical art in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but some general notes may be made on theatres that were typical or peculiar, and on the main tendencies which may be traced throughout the scenic art of the eighteenth century. For this purpose it may be well to start with a set of plans for a theatre designed by Andrea Pozzo (Fig. 173). This was published in 1692, but its composition must be

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[1] *Infra*, p. 165.

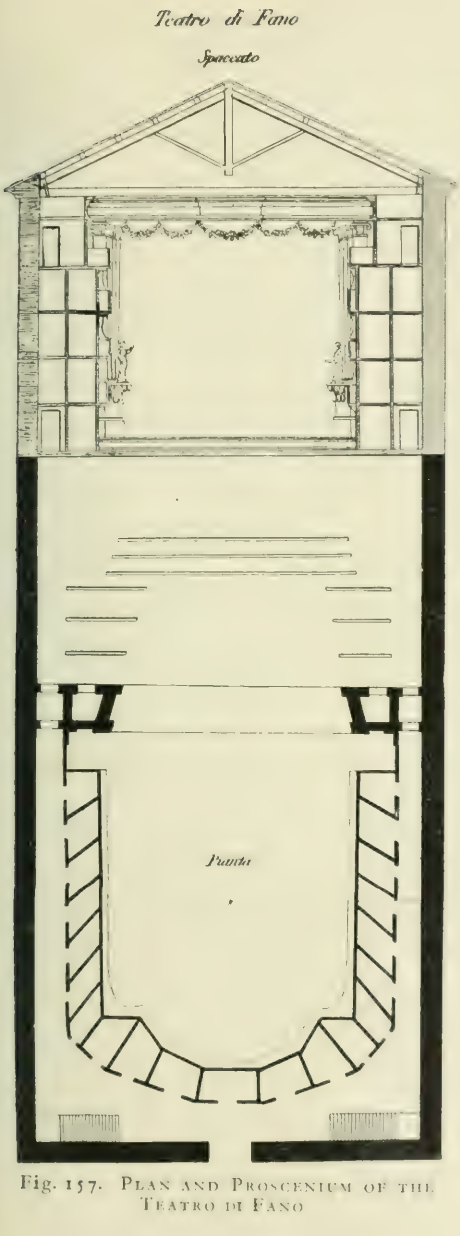
Teatro di Fano
Spaccato
Pianta

Fig. 157. Plan and Proscenium of the Teatro di Fano

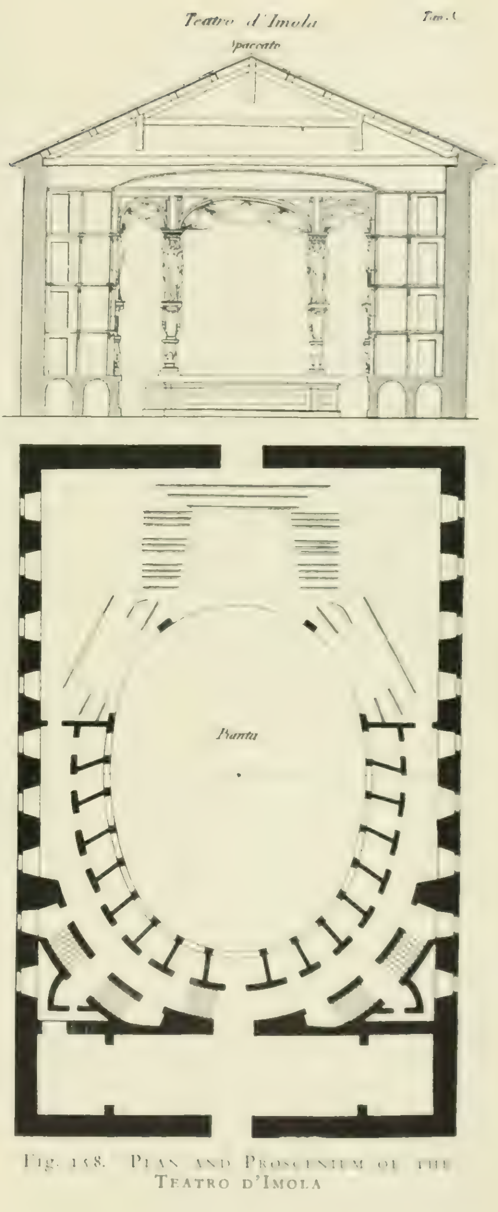
Teatro d'Imola
Tav.
Spaccato
Pianta

Fig. 158. Plan and Proscenium of the Teatro d'Imola

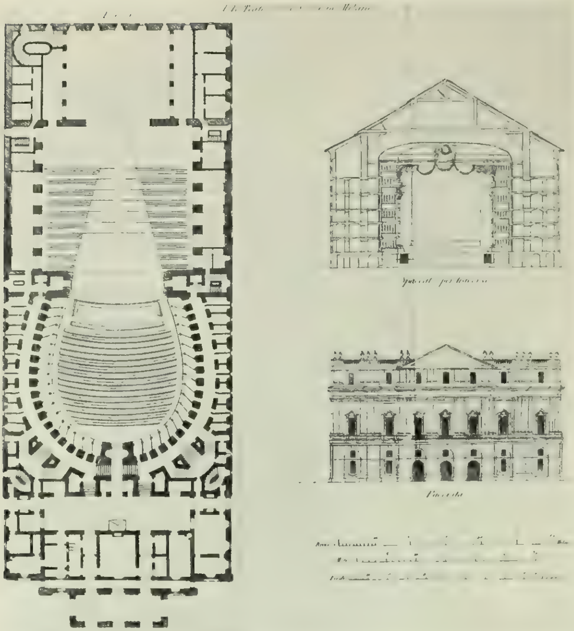

Fig. 159. Plan of the Teatro alla Scala at Milan

of a considerably earlier date. The importance of these plans lies in the fact that they represent what may be regarded as the norm of a late seventeenth-century Italian playhouse, that from which deviations were made, both as regards seating accommodation and as regards setting, in the search for the ideal. The auditorium, it will be noted, is almost a semicircle, while at the same time the seats are arranged, not Roman fashion in a sloping *cavea*, but in a series of five galleries divided into sections by pillars or partitions. On the stage itself there is a set of six side-wings placed obliquely to the stage-front and decreasing in height as they reach the rear. Farther back are two sets of 'shutters' or cloths, with a space behind for still further and more elaborate perspective effects. On this model the scenic artists worked, now altering the shape of the auditorium, now moving the wings parallel with the stage-front, now attempting built-up designs. With Pozzo's theatre in our mind we may turn to our selected and representative designs for the purpose of gaining some idea concerning the main tendencies of the time.

(ii) Theatre Structure

During this period Italy still gave the lead to the artists of other countries. Experimentation there undoubtedly was more active than in France, Germany, or England, and even when, as in Russia, royal money was spent lavishly on theatrical productions, it was to Italy that the managers sent for scenic talent. This experimentation, naturally, takes many forms; but for our purposes it will be convenient to consider it in so far as it concerns the two parts of the play-

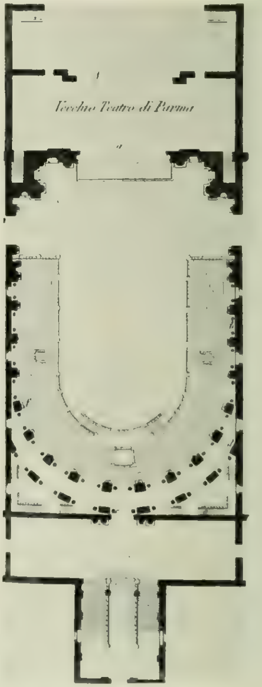

Fig. 160. Plan of the Teatro Farnese at Parma

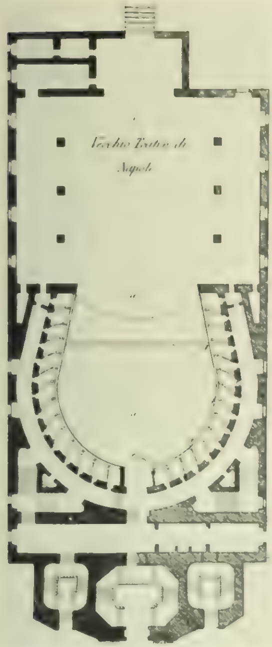

Fig. 161. Plan of the Old Theatre at Naples

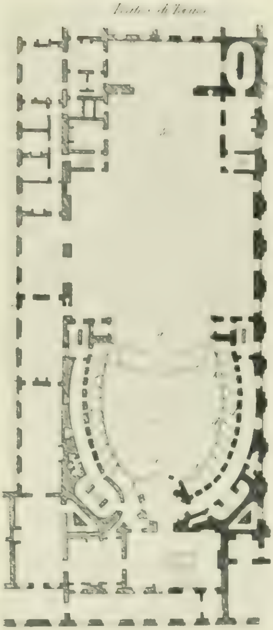

Fig. 162. Plan of the Teatro di Torino

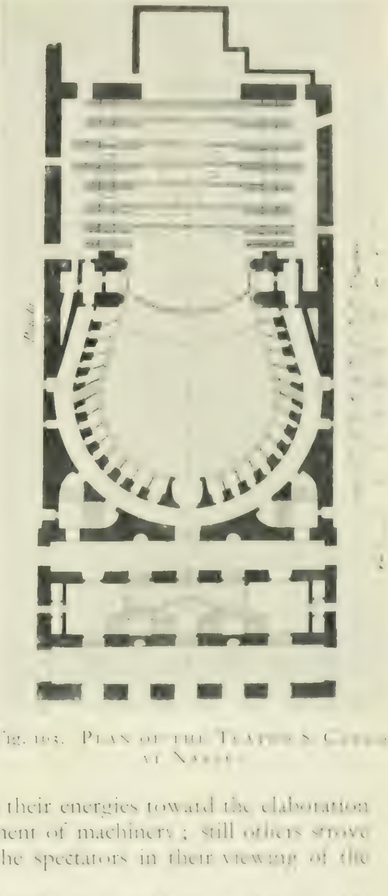

Fig. 163. Plan of the Teatro S. Carlo at Naples

house—the auditorium and the stage. Some artists bent all their energies toward the elaboration of the setting; others devoted themselves to the development of machinery; still others strove to construct such seating arrangements as would best aid the spectators in their viewing of the marvels displayed beyond the proscenium arch.

Obviously there are many difficulties which face an architect who would plan a theatre. He has not only to provide adequate seating accommodation for what is frequently a large audience; he has to enable that audience both to hear and to see what passes on the stage. Sometimes the double aim baffles the artist. One man will design a theatre of such proportions that at least one section of the audience cannot see part of the stage; another will construct a playhouse in which only one word out of three can be heard by the spectators in the farther parts of the house. Still, whatever mistakes were made, we can see how surely the generations of experience were teaching the architects and how, out of that experience, new and better forms were being derived.

The semicircular, or Greek, auditorium was often found unsatisfactory, sometimes because of the fact that it did not seat sufficient spectators, sometimes because the plot of land on which the playhouse was being built demanded an oblong and not a round, square, or octagonal outside wall. In general the main tendency was toward the lengthened auditorium, the precise

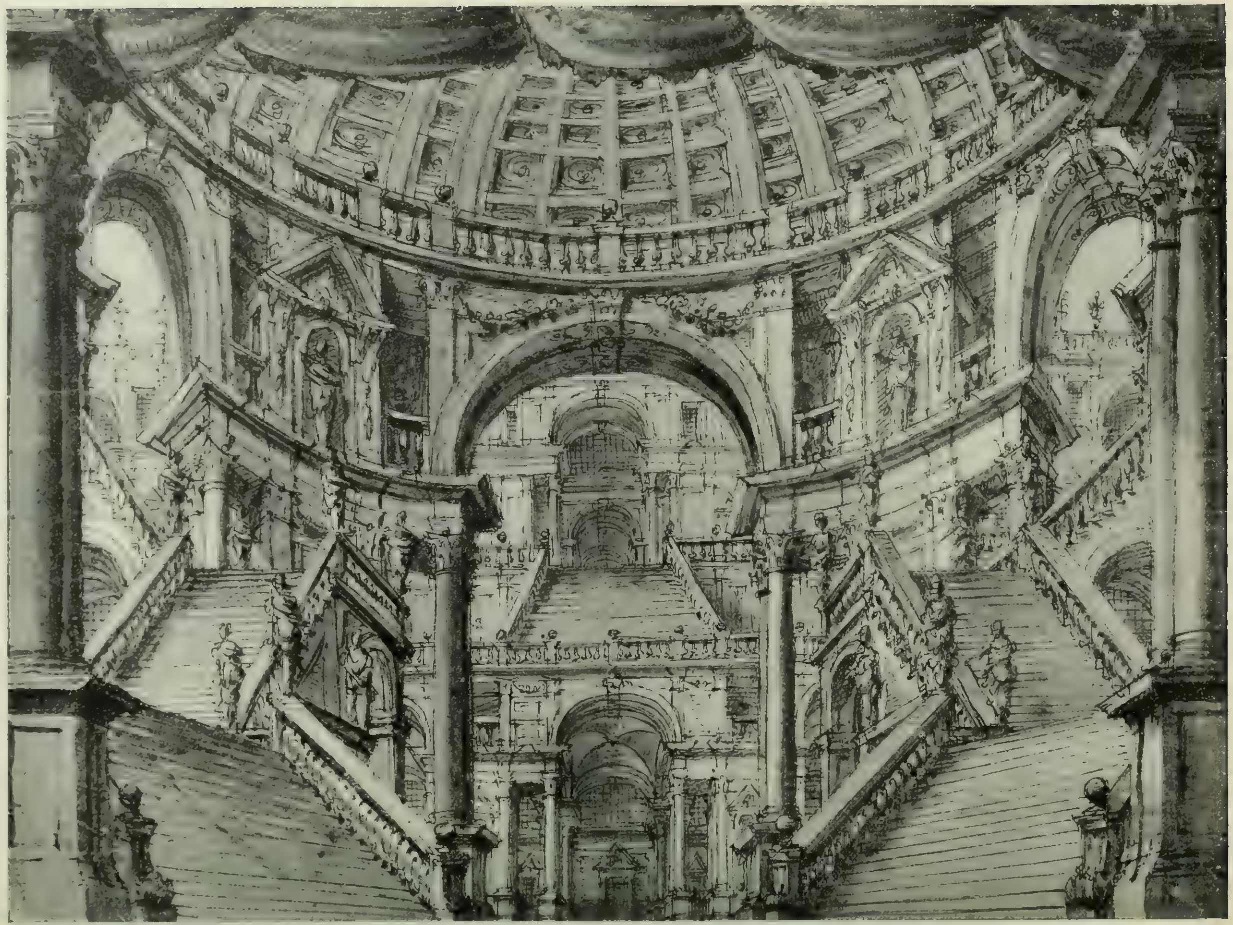

Fig. 164. Theatrical Design by F. da Bibiena

From the original in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

shape taking different forms in the hands of various architects; sometimes with straight galleries running at right angles to the stage-front, sometimes with ovoid galleries, sometimes with an auditorium formed like a horseshoe. The ovoid auditorium is shown clearly enough in the ideal design of Patté (Fig. 156) and in the Teatro di Torino (Fig. 162) with a variant form in the Teatro d'Imola (Fig. 158). The same model dictated the structure of the famous Teatro Tor di Nona, built at Rome in 1671. Other architects preferred the straight-sided type. In the Teatro di Fano (Fig. 157) the galleries run back parallel with the outside walls, and are joined one to another by a fanciful series of curves and angles. The Teatro Farnese at Parma (Fig. 160), as we have seen, has the same general form save that the two side galleries are gradually arched round at the back of the theatre, the general shape of the auditorium being thus a semicircle with the seats carried forward toward the stage at right angles to the diameter. The horseshoe form was also popular. It is to be seen in the Teatro alla Scala at Milan (Fig. 159), in the Old Theatre at Naples (Fig. 161) and in the Teatro S. Carlo at Naples (Fig. 163). In many of these plans it is evident that the lines of sight were not of the best, and many architects endeavoured to remedy their defects. Most interesting of all these devices is that which we find utilized by Ferdinando Bibiena in the Teatro Ducale Nuovo at Mantua, by Francesco da Bibiena in the Verona Teatro Filharmonico, and by G. A. Falcone in the Teatro Falcone at Genoa, whereby the boxes were made to project slightly in strict order so that necks should not be strained in watching the pirouettes of the dancer or the wonders of the changing scene. In this and other ways, in one design after

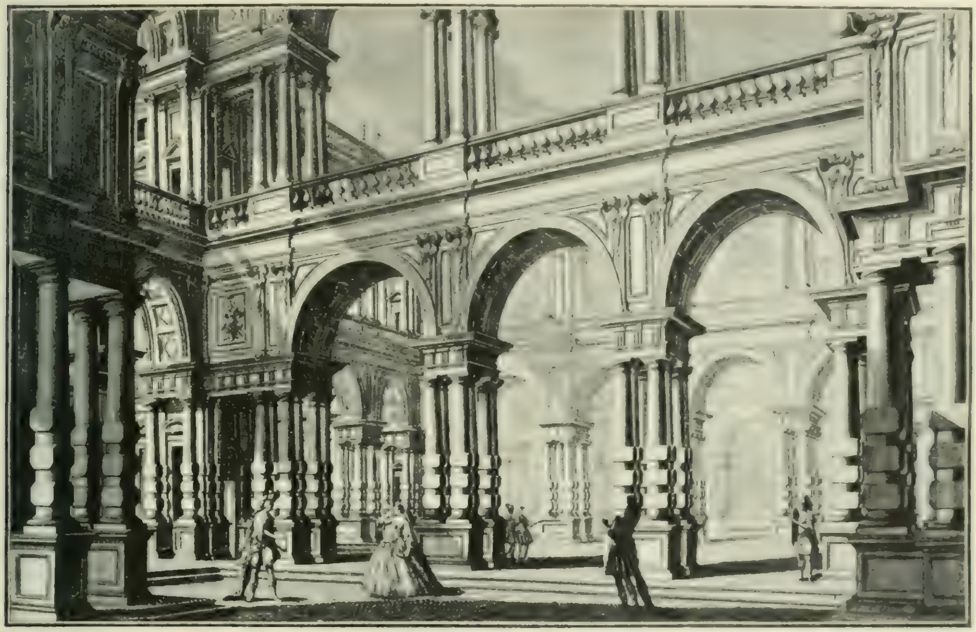

Fig. 165. Theatrical Design by Giuseppe Bibiena

another, with wider or shallower galleries, with semicircular curves, and ellipses, and straight lines, the architects showed in what respects they were seeking for their Platonic ideal, the perfect theatre.

While noting the various experiments in auditorium structure, we may pay some attention too to the arrangement of the proscenium arch. In general, we may say that three styles attracted the artists. The first of these demands that the proscenium pillars should stand at the extreme corners of the stage, but that there should recede obliquely a kind of false façade which leads the eye directly back to the scenes themselves. Such an arrangement is clearly shown in Patte's ideal theatre (Fig. 156), in the Teatro di Fano (Fig. 157), and in the Teatro Farnese at Parma (Fig. 160). The second utilized only the proscenium arch itself, without any recessed façade, providing, as is obvious, the model for the typical theatres of to-day. This is illustrated in the Teatro alla Scala (Fig. 159), in the Old Theatre at Naples (Fig. 161), and in the Teatro di Torino (Fig. 162). Finally, there is the peculiar device embodied in the stage arrangements of the Teatro d'Imola (Fig. 158). Here the proscenium pillars appear in front, but the arch is carried round semicircularly and supported on two other pillars further back stage, thus providing not one complete arch but three arches. Behind that in the centre the chief setting appears, but flats and a back-cloth are placed also behind each of the other two, so that even those spectators at the sides of the house may have something wherewith to feast their eyes.

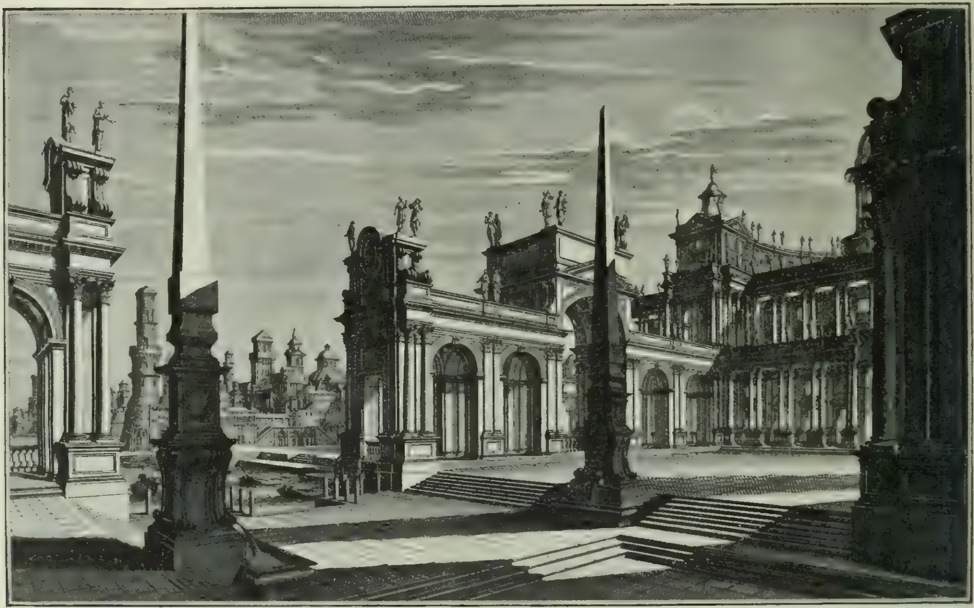

Fig. 166. THEATRICAL DESIGN BY GIUSEPPE BIBIENA

It is clear that each of these three styles derives directly from the original Teatro Olimpico, erected centuries before by Palladio. The three main openings have been preserved most completely in the Imola design, but the formal proscenium arch shown in the Teatro Farnese and in later theatres reveals only a simplification of the triple doorways of the Vicenza playhouse. It is noticeable, however, that the later architects of the Continent almost all moved those archways forward, so that the stage action took place behind, and not before, the façade. In other words there is hardly any relic of an 'apron' in the Continental theatres; that 'apron,' inherited in the Restoration from the Elizabethan platform stage, formed the principal point of difference between the playhouses of England and those of Italy and France. Fully a century earlier than in London the Continental actors became part of the scenic display, not standing forward, as in Drury Lane, with what was essentially but a decoration, a background, behind them.[1]

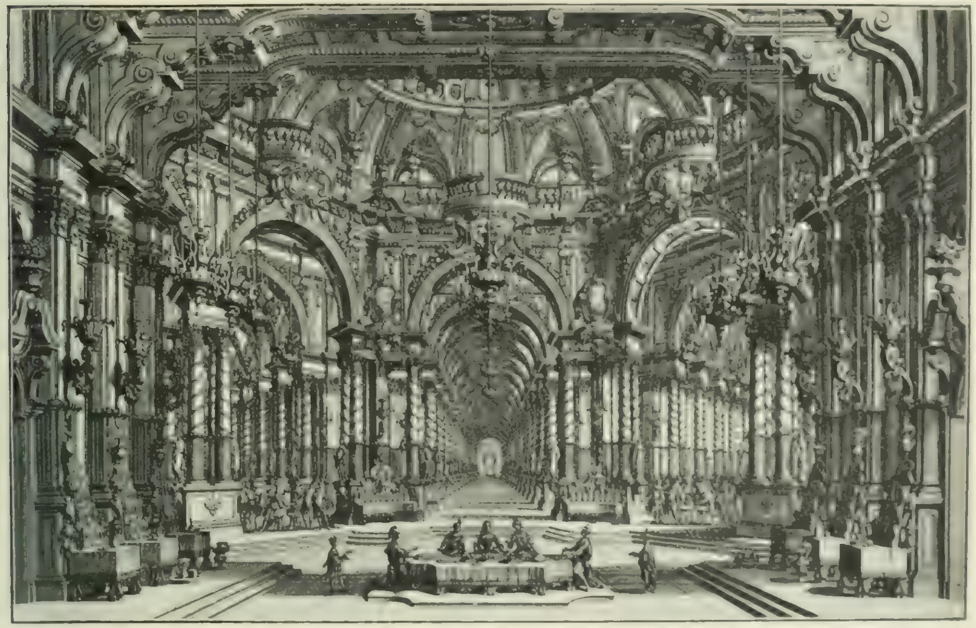

Fig. 167. Theatrical Design by Giuseppe Bibiena

(iii) Scenic Design

By far the most important feature of late seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century theatrical endeavour is concerned with the efforts of the scene designers. Opera had become a fully established form of dramatic art, and through the opera came those tremendous architectural fantasies which we associate with this period. The secret of side wings and flats run in grooves had by this time been fully learned, and numerous changes of setting could be easily secured in the course of one play. In 1671 the *Dario* of Beverini had no fewer than fifteen different scenes, and this example can be paralleled by scores of others. These side-wings, first placed obliquely on the stage, were soon set in their accustomed modern position, parallel to the front of the stage, and were also fitted with mechanical apparatus by which they could be drawn up to the flies as well as run off at the sides.

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[1] It is obvious that on the Continent the whole of the original Olympic "proscenium" was moved forward to the front of the stage; in England it remained for a century and a half at the rear of the actors.

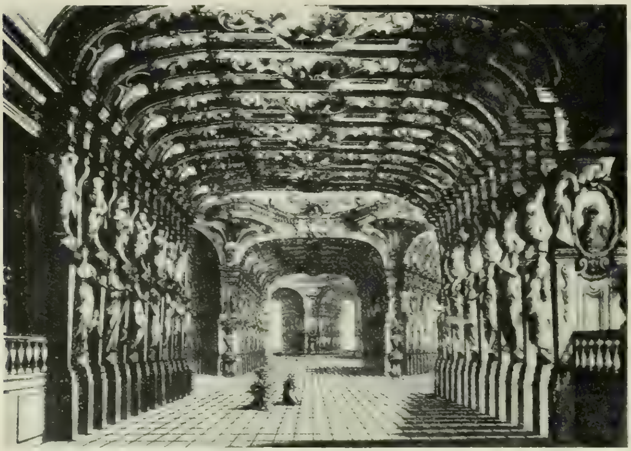

Fig. 168. Theatrical Design by Giuseppe Bibiena
From Corrado Ricci, *I Bibiena.*

The age teems with a host of men who became famous for their work in the theatres—Gaspare Vigarani (1586–1663), Giovanni Servandoni (1695–1766), Giacomo Torelli da Fano (1608–78), and many others, above whom tower the well-known members of the Bibiena family. Taking his name from his birthplace, Giovanni Maria Galli (1619–65), called Bibiena, first laid the foundations of an artistry which became the hereditary property of his descendants. His sons, Ferdinando (1657–1743) and Francesco (1659–1739), both devoted themselves to scenic work, as did his grandsons, Antonio (1700–74) and Giuseppe (1696–1756), and his great-grandsons, Alessandro (died 1760) and Carlo (born 1725). The two last-mentioned aided in carrying the work of the family beyond the confines of Italy, the former producing his most characteristic settings in Germany, and the latter serving theatres in that country as well as in Holland and Russia. The Bibiena style has become well known. Employing freely the heavily decorated model of baroque architecture, the various members of the family produced a series of scenic designs which can only amaze through their stupendous grandeur and charm, through their artistic proportions and innate beauty. The majestic columns and spacious proportions shown in Fig. 164 are thoroughly typical of their work, as is the bold massing of light and shade in the design of a city square in Fig. 165. Especially interesting are the engravings contained in a volume of *Architetture e Prospettive* (1740) by Giuseppe Bibiena. Examples of these are presented in Figs. 166 and 168. Particular notice should be taken of the manner in which a bold perspective is called into the service of scenic artistry.

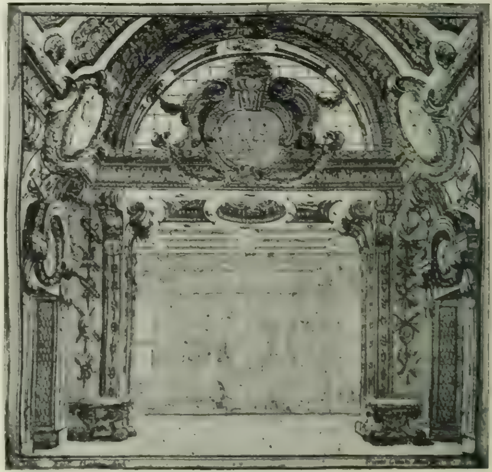

Fig. 169. Proscenium Design by F. da Bibiena
From Corrado Ricci, *op. cit.*

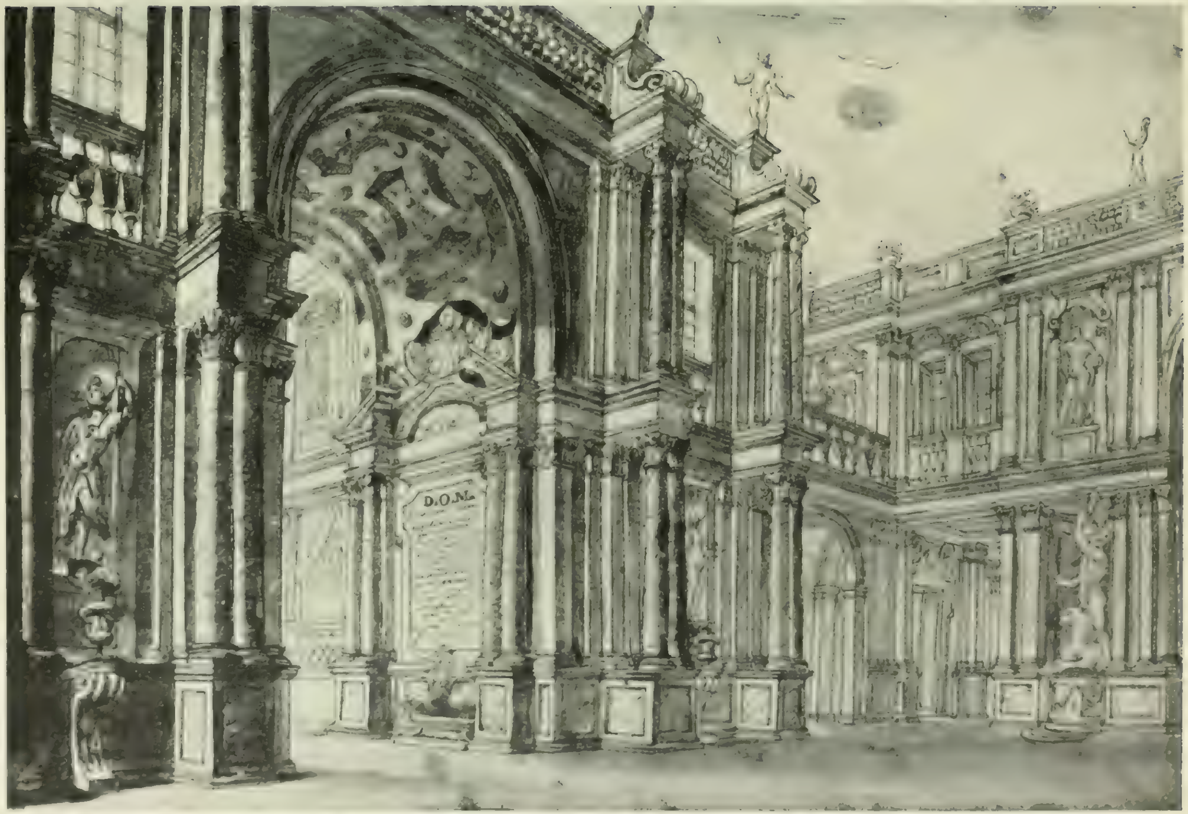

FIG. 17[illegible]. BAROQUE ITALIAN DESIGN: BIBIENA FAMILY

From the original in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

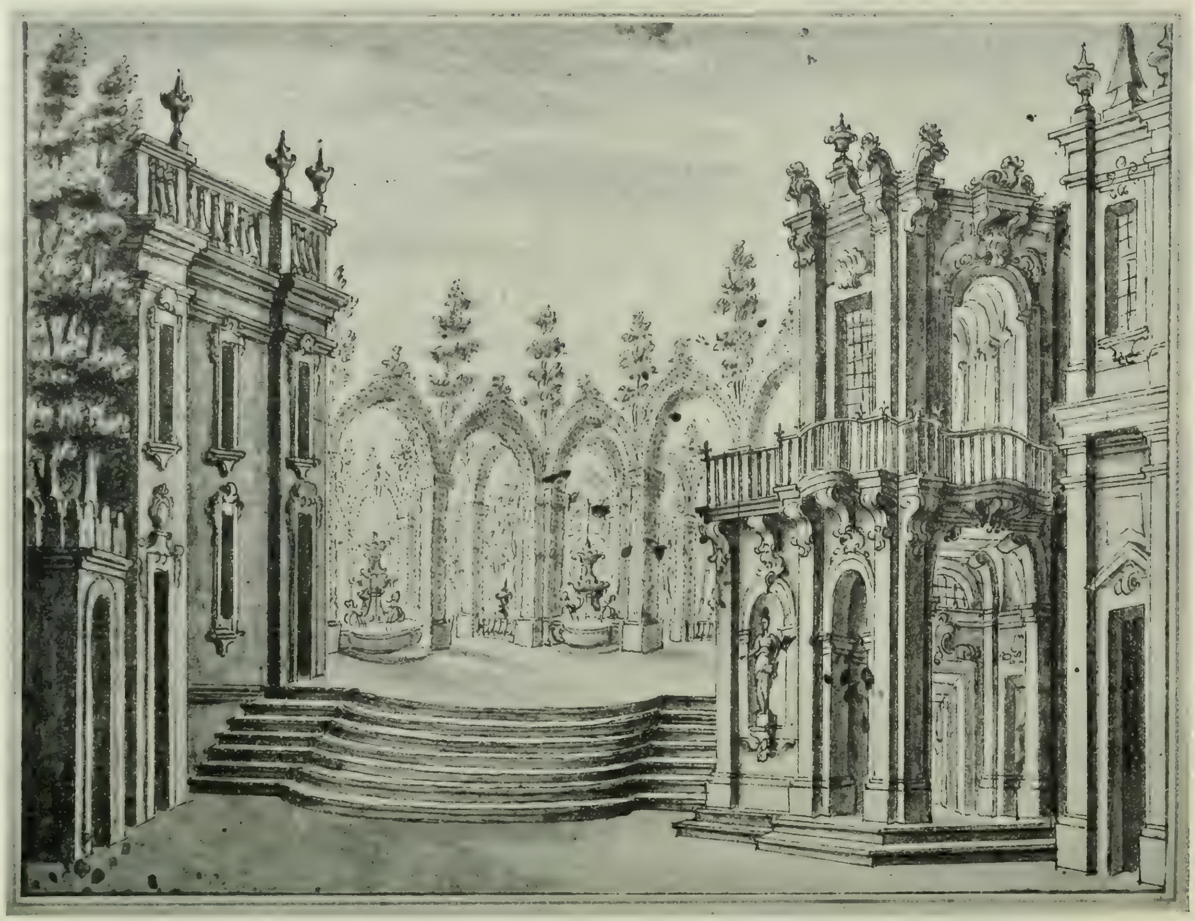

Fig. 171. THEATRICAL DESIGN ATTRIBUTED TO THE BIBIENA FAMILY

From the original in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

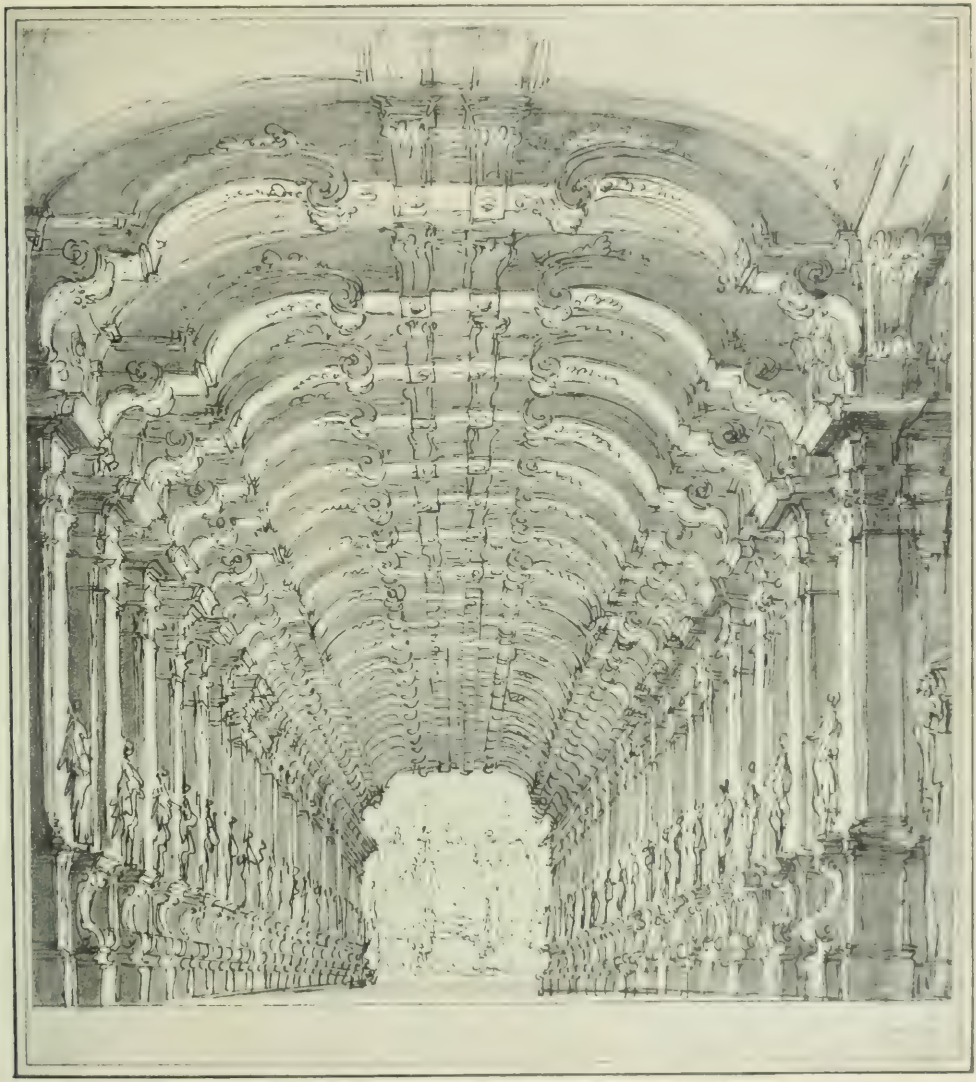

Fig. 172. Theatrical Design by F. da Bibiena

From the original in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

With these most valuable and interesting designs and plans may be considered the sketches for a theatre and flats given in Andrea Pozzo's *Prospettiva dei Pittori e Architetti* (vol. i, 1692; vol. ii, 1700). Fig. 173 has already been noted (see p. 138); Figs. 174 and 175 delineate typical settings.

An important commentary too is provided in a volume of designs executed by the architect F. Juvarra when he was superintendent of the private theatre in Rome belonging to Cardinal Ottoboni.[1] This volume of sketches and thumbnail plans, which is preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum, not only shows clearly the inventiveness and beauty apparent in baroque scene-designing in the eighteenth century, but provides us with some exceedingly valuable information. We note, first of all, as in the Bibiena designs, how many supposedly modern developments in theatrical art are but revivals of eighteenth-century endeavour. Thus the steps, of which so much has been said of recent years, appear in at least half of the settings of the Bibiena family and are freely used in Juvarra's efforts. Furthermore, there is a suggestion in at least one group of these sketches that the permanent set such as has been used in our own days was frequently employed by this almost forgotten artist of eighteenth-century Italy. A glance at Fig. 176 will show that the archway presented in the large design is nothing but a permanent set of this kind, alterations being made *behind* the arch to accord with the requirements of the acts of the drama.

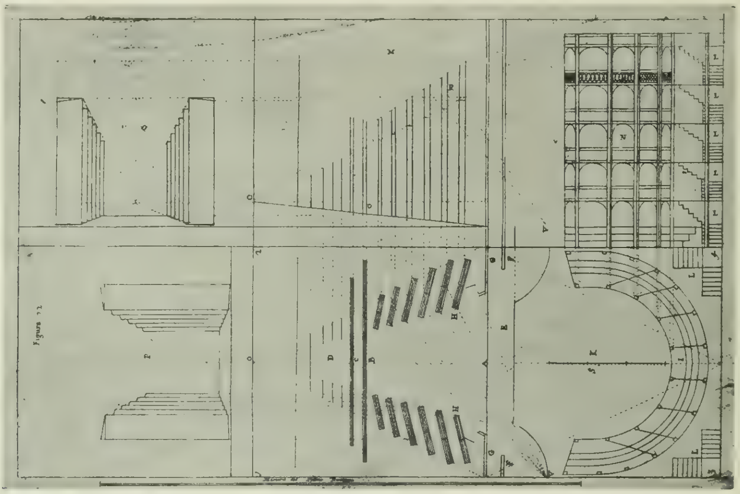

Fig. 173. **Plans and Cross-section of a Theatre by Andrea Pozzo**

This shows clearly the evolution of the modern playhouse with balconies and flats.

Having glanced at these designs we may pause for a moment to consider how such sketches were realized in actual concrete form on the boards of the stage. Some, of course, such as Figs. 168, 172, 174, and 175, are clearly drawn with the usual plan of side-wings and back-cloths in the mind of the artist. Pozzo's sketches are quite explicit; side-wings, painted in perspective, are so placed on the stage as to give the appearance of a columned arcade or of a timbered hall. But what are we to make of the massive proportions of Ferdinando Bibiena's design in Fig. 164, or of Giuseppe Bibiena's engravings, or of Juvarra's sketches? In order to understand these aright, we have to remember that, in his *Direzioni ai giovani*, Ferdinando Bibiena had outlined still another method of securing perspective effect in the theatre. In its simplest form his device was to place one line of the scenery at right angles to the other. Generally these two

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[1] Filippo Juvarra (1684–1735) has hitherto remained almost unknown as a scenic artist. Since the writing of this book, however, several others of his designs have been reproduced, notably by Mr Gordon Craig in *The Architectural Review*. None of these have the exceedingly valuable scene-plans given in the sketches here.

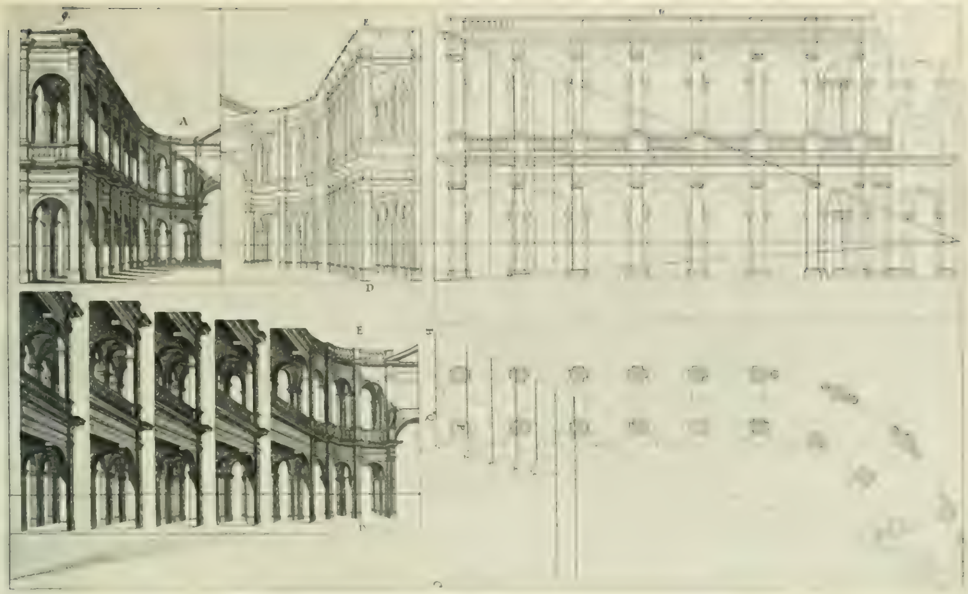

Fig. 174. Theatrical Design by Andrea Pozzo

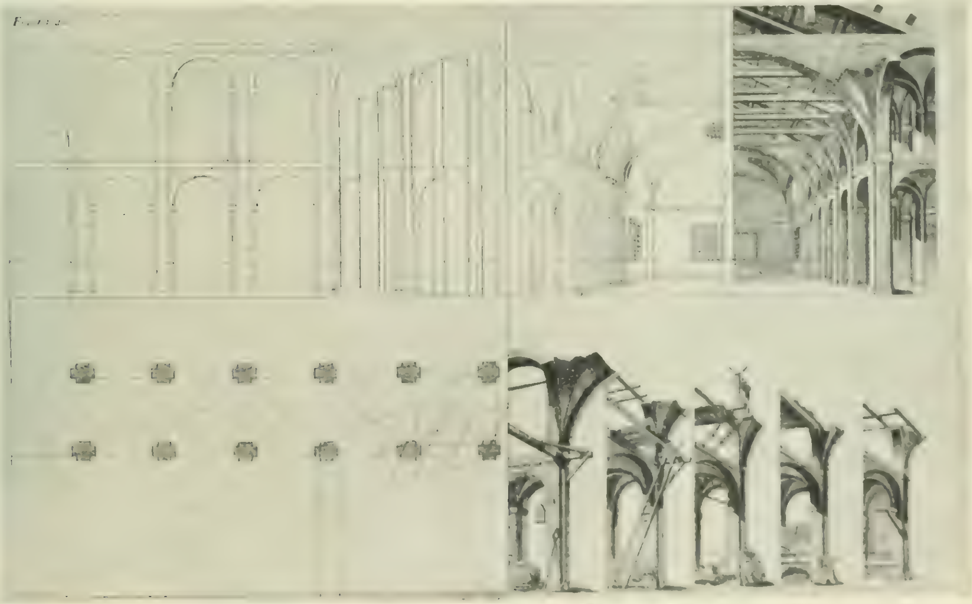

Fig. 175. Theatrical Design by Andrea Pozzo

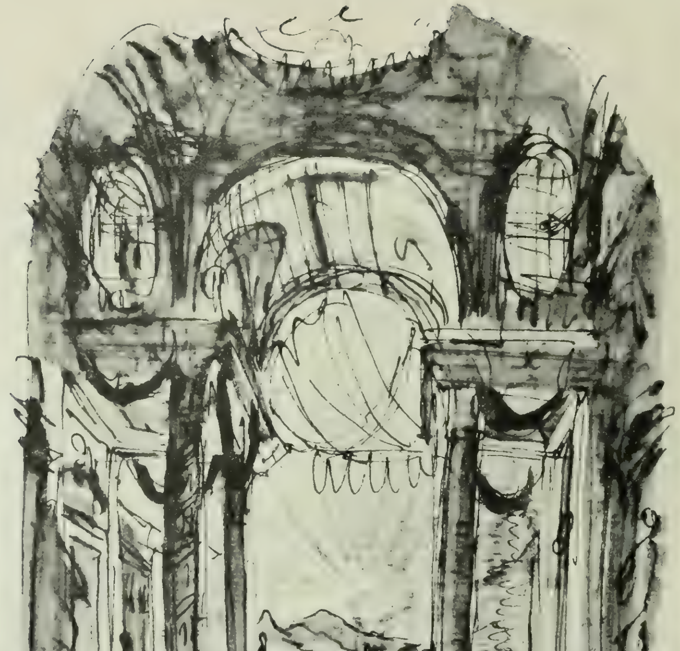

Fig. 176. Theatrical Design by F. Juvarra

Note should be taken of the permanent setting used apparently with a variety of back-cloths.
From the original in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

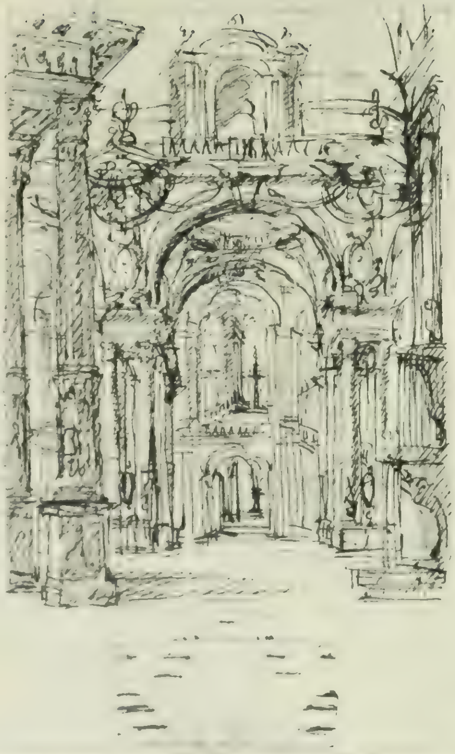

Fig. 177. Theatrical Design by F. Juvarra

[illegible] below the scene

[illegible] in the Victoria and Albert Museum

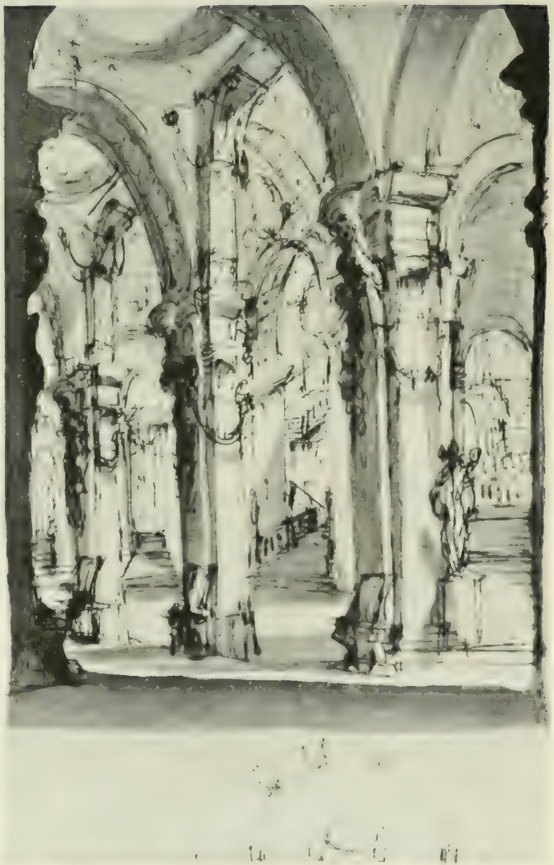

Fig. 178. Theatrical Design by F. Juvarra

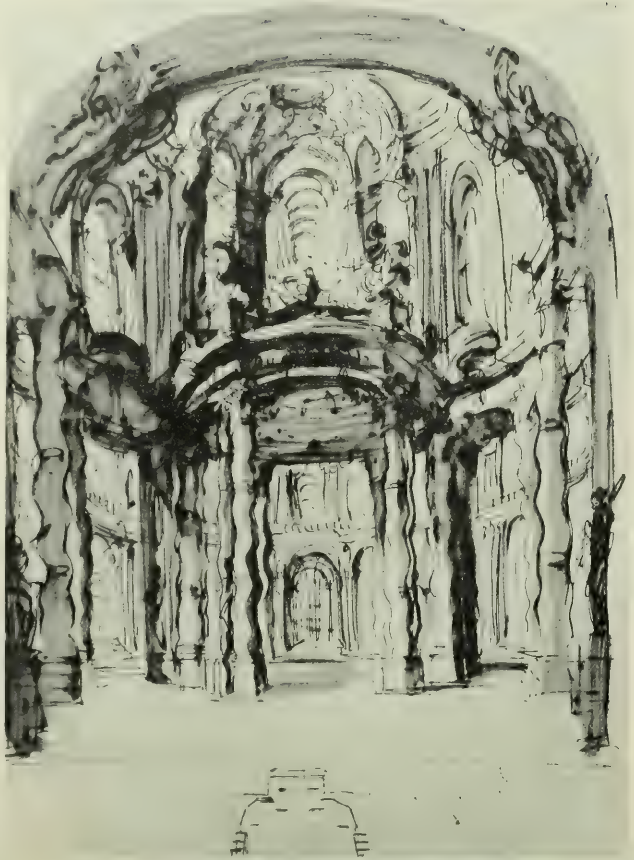

Fig. 179. THEATRICAL DESIGN BY F. JUVARRA

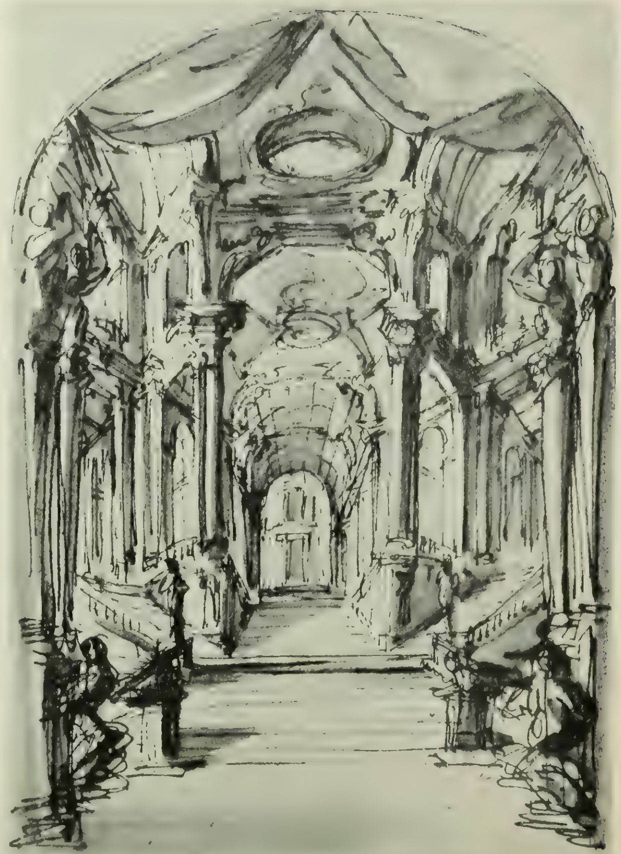

Fig. 180. THEATRICAL DESIGN BY F. JUVARRA

"Ingresso nobile della Scala del Palasso Imperiale."

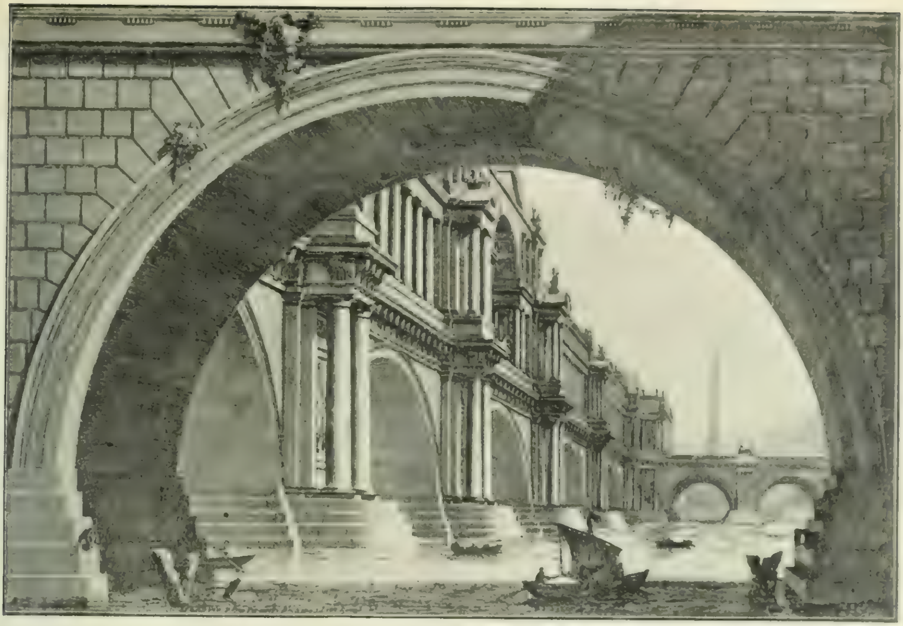

Fig. 181. THEATRICAL DESIGN BY PIRANESI

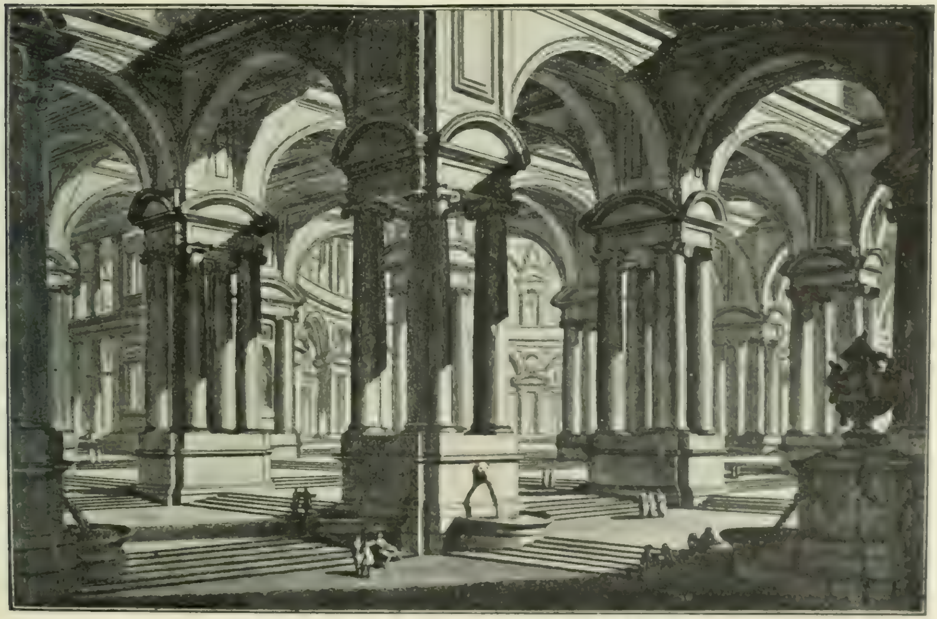

Fig. 182. THEATRICAL DESIGN BY PIRANESI

lines of scenery made an isosceles triangle with the stage-front. Obviously such an arrangement demands more than the mere flat side-wings which had hitherto been in use, and we have to allow in Ferdinando Bibiena's scenic work for the presence of built-up effects. In other words, by the early eighteenth century many scenographers were making a judicious use of both built-up effects and of perspectively painted flat scenery. In looking at Fig. 164, for example, one might suppose that all of the palace courtyard seen beyond the central arch would be merely painted on a back-cloth, whereas the stairs to left and right would be of necessity practicable. Juvarra's sketches with their accompanying plans throw considerable light on this subject. In Fig. 177 clearly the whole architectural setting is made out of three pairs of side-wings, two cut arches at the rear, and a final back-cloth. So in Fig. 179 side-wings, harmonized with curved side-cloths, give the ornamented round. Fig. 178, however, presents something different. Solid, or fictionally solid, pillars stand in the front, and what seems to be a clear indication is given of the practicability of the stairs to the left. Probably there are no more interesting and informative designs of eighteenth-century workmanship than those contained in Juvarra's happily preserved scenic diary.

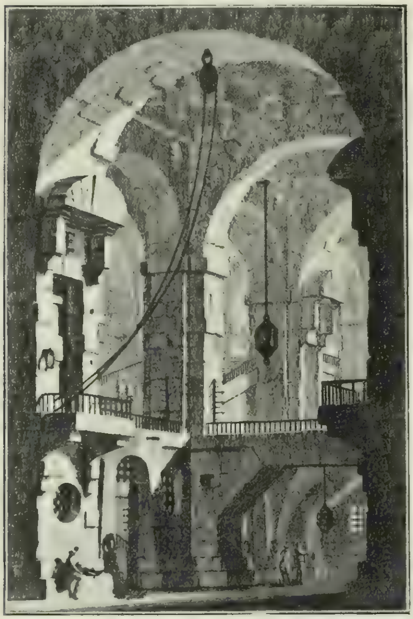

Fig. 183. A Prison Scene by Piranesi

The architectural style, with its rich baroque or rococo ornaments, was destined to dominate the Italian—and, through the Italian, the European—stages for over a century. Classicism delighted in it, and the florid styles pleased those who sought for spectacle. Naturally the Bibienas were the inspirers of many a succeeding scenographer. Another family tradition was established by Bernardino Galliari of Andorno (1707–94), whose brother, Fabrizio, and nephews, Giovanni and Giuseppe, carried on a style very similar to theirs. Then comes Gian Battista Piranesi (1720–78), of Venice, even richer of genius, lover of bold light and shade, whose fame was to pass far and wide over Europe. The great courtyard shown in Fig. 182 depends upon the pioneer efforts of the Bibienas, yet it is stronger, more powerful, than the majority of their efforts. Magnificent imagination he has, and can see, as no preceding scenic artist could, the impression that may be conveyed to a spectator by dark near forms with light beyond (Fig. 181). His mind, too, turns occasionally to that which might almost be called romantic, as in his prison scene (Fig. 183), with its gloomy forms and dim-cast gleams of sunlight. Nor was the architectural style killed with the coming of the new realist and romantic movement. Pietro Gonzaga (died 1831), the student of Canaletto, who created such a *furore* in the Imperial Theatre of Russia, merely carries the architecture outside, loving to show an open landscape backed by some towered and mountain-set Italian city. In the hands of others the Gothic arch came to supersede the Roman, but the same lofty columns, the same vistas of palace court remained. Even the Egyptians were brought into the service of the theatre. Both romanticists and classicists united in this common love, and for years the stage of Italy, as well as the stages of nearly all European capitals, was dominated by buildings now in Roman, now in rococo, and now in Gothic style.

CHAPTER IX

RESTORATION THEATRES

(i) Stage History

THESE impressive and monumental baroque designs had, of course, their influence in London, but it is a strange fact that while English scenic endeavour up to the time of Inigo Jones kept well abreast of Continental example, after 1660 it lagged lamentably behind, and has not even yet recovered from a position of inferiority which it has thus occupied for two and a half centuries. Experiment went on, and goes on, here as abroad, but there has been lacking in our theatres that tremendous artistic interest and enthusiasm which is so well seen in the designs of Bibiena and of Piranese. An Italian opera at the Haymarket must have been but a poor thing when compared with productions in Rome or Vienna; a Garrick performance, brilliant as it might be in acting, can have presented little that merited comparison with French, German, and even Russian efforts in scenic design. It is this period of often imitative work which now it is our business to consider.

For all practical purposes we may say that acting ceased in 1642 and was not resumed until the restoration of Charles II in 1660. This statement, of course, requires modification. There were sporadic attempts made during those eighteen years to revive plays in London. In the provinces apparently performances still were given. "Drolls," cut down from Elizabethan dramas, were presented with fair frequency. An occasional masque made its appearance. Above all, on May 23, 1656, D'Avenant arranged at Rutland House in Aldersgate an "Entertainment" followed by *The Siege of Rhodes*, given first at Rutland House and later at the Cockpit or Phoenix. This play, in *stilo recitativo*, gave English audiences their first taste of Italian opera, that type of play which, both in France and Italy, had done so much for the encouraging of scenic effect.

A year or two later it was clear to all that the Stuarts would return. The actors gathered together once more, and playing recommenced in earnest. At first, naturally, the old theatres were utilized. The Red Bull, a house famous for rant in the pre-Commonwealth days, was used as early as 1659; the Cockpit was open the year following, as was Salisbury Court. In July of the latter year the King issued patents (or monopolies) to D'Avenant and Thomas Killigrew, thus establishing those two major theatres in London which endured, with occasional rivalry from lesser authorized or unauthorized houses, till the first half of the nineteenth century. The Killigrew, or Royal, troupe started first on November 8, 1660, at a converted indoor tennis court in Vere Street, Clare Market. A Theatre Royal was opened at Bridges Street, Covent Garden, on May 7, 1663. This playhouse was burnt to the ground on January 25, 1672, and a new Theatre Royal in Drury Lane was opened in 1674. The other band of actors, under D'Avenant, known as the Duke of York's company, after playing at Salisbury Court, settled down in a new theatre at Lincoln's Inn Fields, a scene they abandoned only when a theatre at Dorset Garden was opened on November 9, 1671. There is no need here to enter into details concerning the various minor companies which so complicate the theatrical history of this time; rather may we take these new houses as typical, and, along with them, the Court theatre at Whitehall where performances of English and Continental plays were frequently given.

(ii) Webb's Designs for "The Siege of Rhodes"

Happily, a number of drawings and prints aid us in our survey of Restoration stage endeavour. Among the various relics preserved of Webb's efforts are a plan and section of Rutland House, together with five scenes for *The Siege of Rhodes*. The plans (Figs. 184 and 185) show a small stage, similar to some which Jones had contrived for his masques, with a fixed architectural proscenium and a series of three rocky side-wings (Fig. 186), which, as in *Florimène*, were allowed to stand throughout the play (Fig. 144). Then follow a series of back-shutters, showing the city of Rhodes and the fleet of Solyman, the outside of the walls and a "releive" of Solyman's pavilion (Figs. 187 and 188). In the last apparently two side-wings representing pillars were drawn out to reveal the chair of state behind. It is evident that these scenes follow very closely on the masque practice of earlier years, and display a type of scene-shifting at once crude and unsatisfactory. The figures painted on the back-shutters, it may be noted, continued to appear even into the eighteenth century, presenting the peculiar phenomenon of stationary persons on the flat contrasted with the living actors on the stage itself.

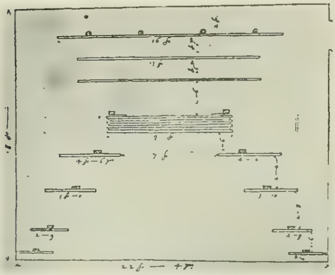

Fig. 184. Plan of the Rutland House Stage for "The Siege of Rhodes" (1656), by John Webb

From the Lansdowne MSS. (1171).

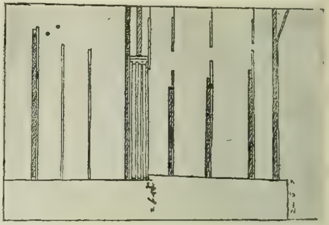

Fig. 185. Section of the Rutland House Stage for "The Siege of Rhodes" (1656), by John Webb

From the Lansdowne MSS. (1171).

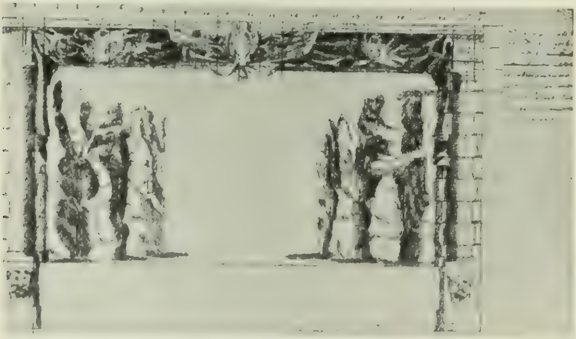

Fig. 186. Proscenium and Permanent Side-wings for "The Siege of Rhodes" (1656). Design by John Webb

From the original in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire.

(iii) Webb's Designs for "Mustapha"

Of equal interest are the plans and sketches prepared by Webb for a performance at Whitehall of Orrery's *Mustapha*. The first (Fig. 189) is a "Plane of the sceanes for the Queens Ballett in the Hall at Whitehall 1665 To bee vsed also for masques & Playes. 1. The Tragedy of Mustapha." It shows a stage with what is evidently a false proscenium, the supports of which are 3 feet 8 inches wide, leaving a proscenium opening of 25 feet. The width of the hall is evidently 39 feet 6 inches between wall and wall. Behind the false proscenium are set the side-scenes, four in number, each 10½ inches deep in order to give depth, for they represent pillars (Fig. 190). The lowest is 3 feet 5 inches long, the rest 6 feet 3 inches, 6 feet 8 inches, and 6 feet 6 inches. A varying space of 3 feet to 3 feet 6 inches separates each pair, and they are arranged in the usual triangular formation. The upper set have 13 feet between them, and are placed so that the back-cloth is 17 feet from the front of the stage. All these scenes are arranged on a heavily raked stage, but at this point, 17 feet from the front, as in the Rutland House design, comes a drop with a flat stage receding from the audience. A peculiarity of these designs is that the "Musick" was set on a sloping platform resting on the two back supports, rising from 12 feet 8 inches above the stage level to a point in the back wall 14 feet high. This orchestra was concealed by a long sky-cloth, and the audience must have looked underneath the improvised gallery at the back-shutters shown in "relieve." The sketch for a scene of *Mustapha*, given in *British Drama*, shows the arrangement well. The orchestra platform would come just at the cross-line immediately below the cornice of the back pillars.

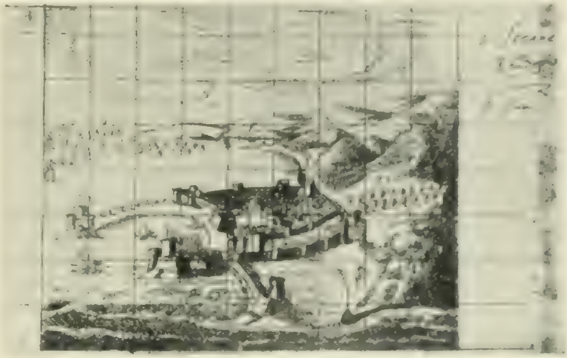

Fig. 187. Design for the Shutter or Back-cloth in "The Siege of Rhodes," Scene I, by John Webb

From the original in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire.

It is perfectly evident that the stage for *The Siege of Rhodes* and the stage for *Mustapha* were, save for the difference in size, planned on the same lines, while both go back for inspiration to the designs of Inigo Jones and to Italian practice. The columns, it may be noted, with the dome at the rear, remind us somewhat of late seventeenth-century baroque settings, so perfectly delineated by the Bibienas.[1]

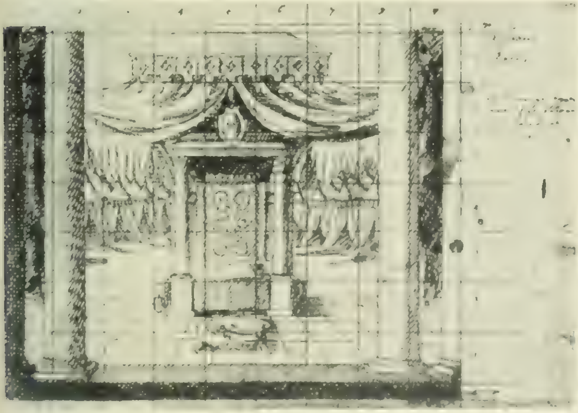

Fig. 188. Design for a "Relieve" in "The Siege of Rhodes," Scene III, by John Webb

From the original in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire

(iv) Plans for Theatres by Christopher Wren

Recently there have been discovered, at All Souls College, Oxford, four designs executed by Sir Christopher Wren during the Restoration period. One of these is almost certainly a cross-section of the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, and may be considered separately; the other three, unfortunately, cannot be assigned to any particular place or to any particular year. Their interest, however, is great, because they show once more the keen attention which was being paid, in England as on the Continent, to theatrical architecture.

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[1] *Supra*, p. 145.

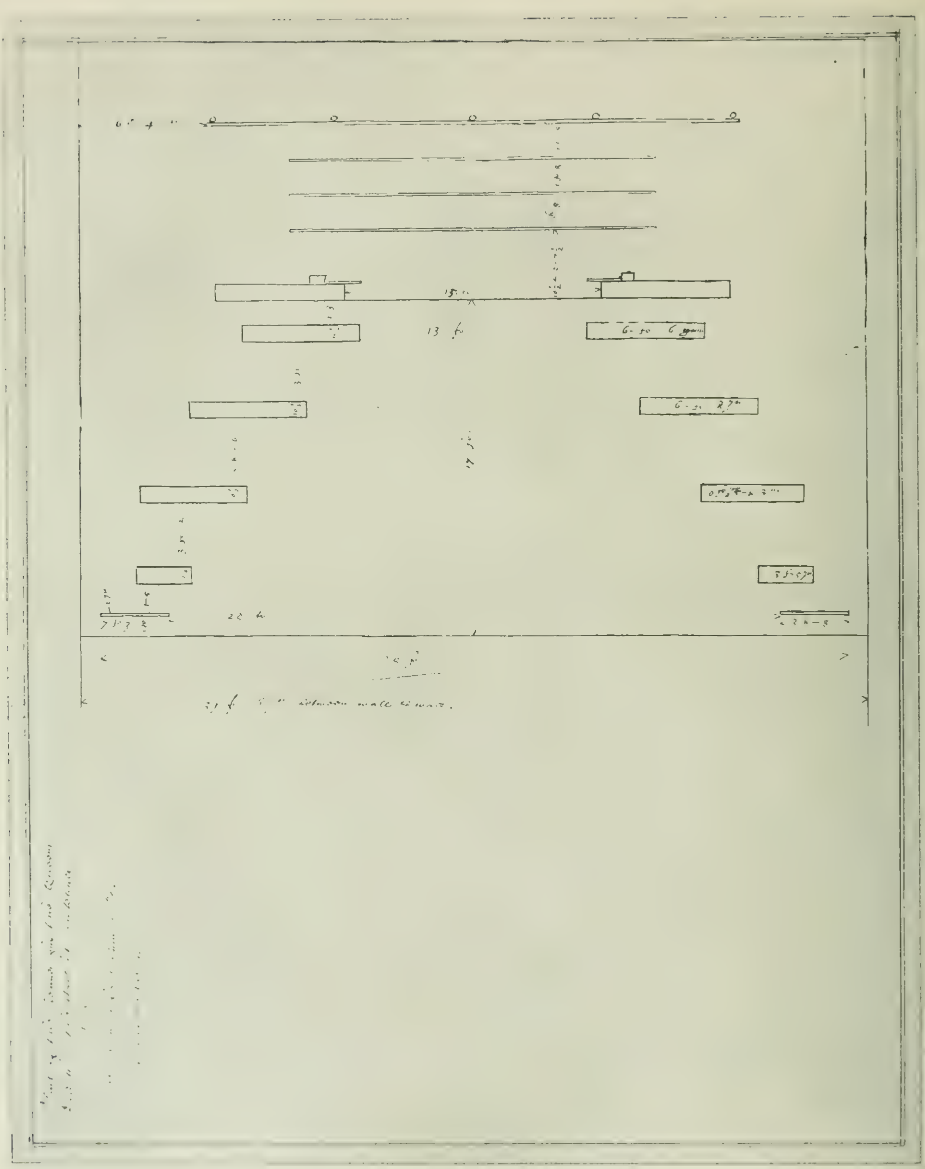

Fig. 189. PLAN OF THE WHITEHALL STAGE FOR "MUSTAPHA" (1665), BY JOHN WEBB

From the original in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire.

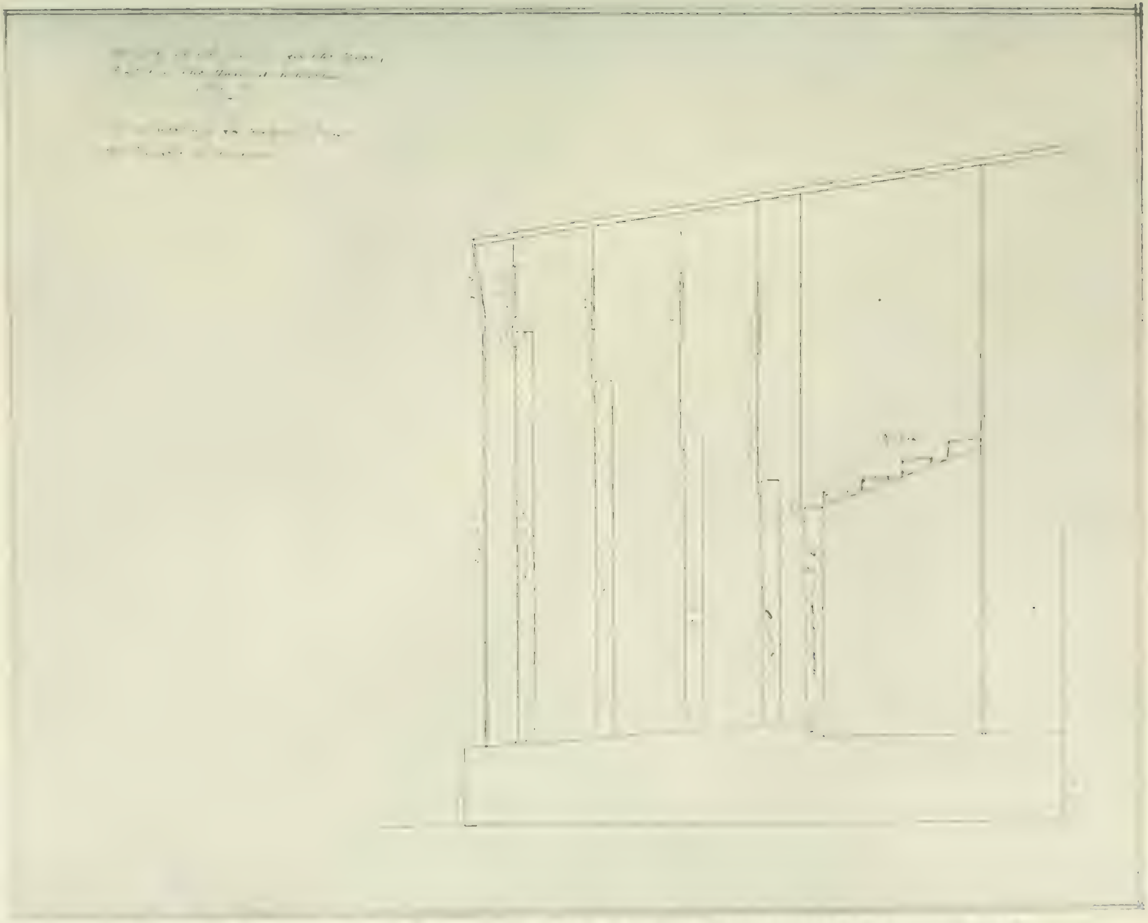

FIG. 190. SECTION OF THE WHITEHALL STAGE FOR "MUSTAPHA" (1665), BY JOHN WEBB

From the original in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire.

By far the most interesting of the three unlocated sketches is that shown in Fig. 191. A plan, a rough cross-section, and a fragmentary elevation of this playhouse are given to us. The auditorium has two galleries set with seats " in segments of circles all struck from the same centre," the spectators being thus given an excellent view of the stage. The segment which marks the seventh row of seats is carried round over the stage space but is cut at two-thirds of the radius by a straight line, which, as we can see, marks the proscenium arch. There is thus left a wide apron bounded on each side by the curving lines of the circle. The cross-section shows that the pit sloped up rapidly to the first tier of boxes and was carried at another steep angle to the second tier. The apron itself was level, but the stage behind, raised above the apron level at a line a few feet behind the proscenium arch, was raked gently. From the sketches which accompany the plans there would seem to be no fewer than four doors at each side under the boxes placed on the apron, unless two of the apertures, which seem to be doors, were in reality stage boxes. It appears just possible, taking into account the fact that the plot of ground which Killigrew leased in 1663 was 112 feet by 59 feet, that these designs were executed for the first Theatre Royal in Bridges Street, although it must be confessed that there is no evidence to show that Wren was in any way connected with the architecture of that house. Still, the plans would roughly fit the space of ground to be filled, and the arrangement of the seats would correspond with the descriptions of Count Lorenzo Magalotti and of M. de Monconys. The latter declares that

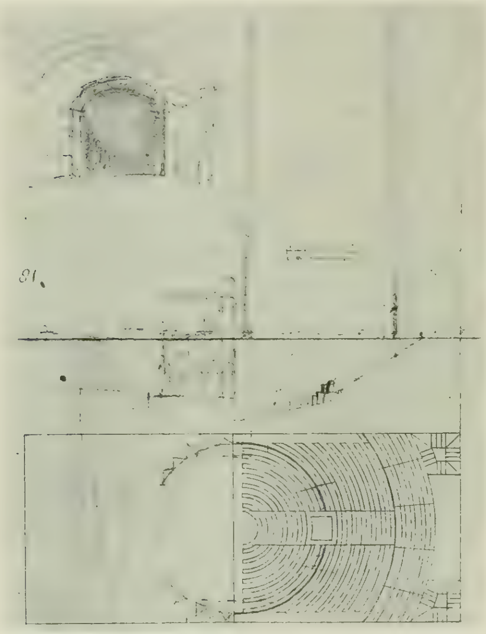

Fig. 191. THEATRE PLAN BY SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN

From the original at All Souls College, Oxford.

> Tous les bancs du parterre où toutes les personnes de condition se mettent aussi, sont rangez en amphithéâtre, les uns plus hauts que les autres.[1]

If Wren's plan were for the first Theatre Royal, his pit would undoubtedly have seemed to a visitor to be " en amphithéâtre " with the broad sweep of the benches and the soaring floor of the house.

The second sketch (Fig. 192) is much less interesting. Here is shown an almost completely semicircular auditorium with a broad apron framed by what no doubt are two boxes on each side. Behind is a square stage space. More finished in detail is Fig. 193, obviously an experiment in design. A highly unsatisfactory auditorium is arranged in an oval shape with eleven sections. There is a rectangular apron and an exceedingly narrow proscenium opening, with, in the rear, a deep, wide stage. Barely one-half of the spectators in this theatre could have had a view of any scenic effects behind, and some could have seen only the front portion of the apron.

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[1] " All the benches of the parterre where even the people of quality sit are arranged as an amphitheatre, one row higher than another."

Obviously the design is one unsuitable for an ordinary public playhouse, although it may have been made for some projected Court theatre. Its detail and finish suggest that it was more than an academic exercise.

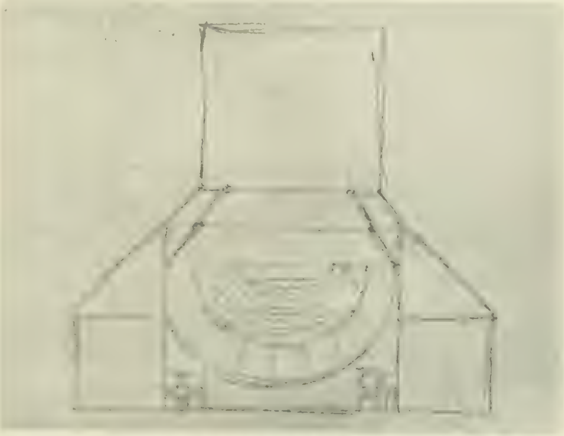

Fig. 192. Theatre Plan by Sir Christopher Wren
From the original at All Souls College, Oxford.

(v) Wren's Design for Drury Lane

Finally we come to what is by far the most important of the four Wren drawings. This (Fig. 194) is a carefully executed section of a theatre 112 feet in length, no doubt, as Mr Hamilton Bell has suggested, an original drawing for the new Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. The general arrangement of the house is made fully apparent in the sketch, but a summary may be given of its principal features. ✓ A slightly raked apron extends 17 feet from the proscenium arch, leaving about 15 feet of stage depth behind. In this back portion of the stage provision is made for four side-wings (or flats) and there are three grooves behind for "shutters." Over the apron on each side are two boxes, beneath which are two doors. The pit slopes upward as in Fig. 191, and there is provision for two tiers of 'boxes,' four on each side being enclosed, the rest arranged merely with dividing pillars. A top gallery faces the stage, but is not carried round the sides of the house.

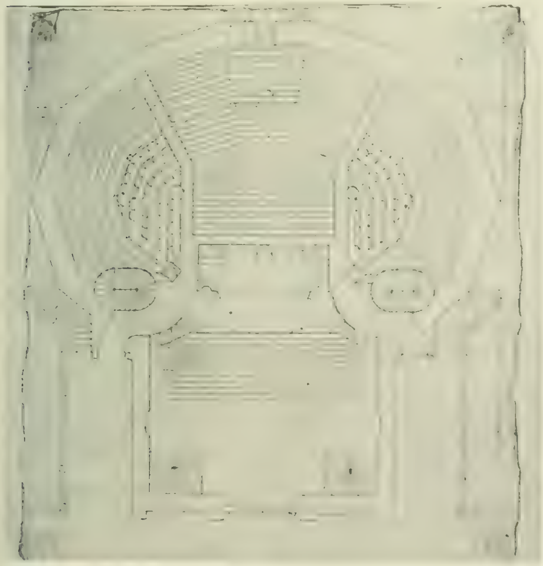

Fig. 193. Theatre[Plan by Sir Christopher Wren
From the original at All Souls College, Oxford.

✓ Unfortunately, we possess no print of this time showing the interior of the theatre, except a highly fantastic frontispiece to the opera of *Ariane* (1674) which shows us a front view of the proscenium and of the apron (Fig. 195). In the *Ariane* design the only part which seems realistic is the proscenium pillars on each side. The apron is far too small, and the conventional buildings were most certainly not solid as they seem to be in the engraving, but merely simulated by a series of side-wings. Still, taken with Sir Christopher Wren's sketch, it aids us in our endeavour to picture the interior of a theatre which had such a distinguished history, which echoed to the voice of a Betterton and a Garrick, and in which were produced so many comedies which to-day we treasure for their incisiveness and refinement of style.

(vi) The Duke's Theatre in Dorset Garden

Of the Duke's Theatre we have no plan, but we do possess, in its stead, an exceedingly instructive series of engravings published in 1673 with the text of Settle's *The Empress of Morocco.* All of these engravings have at various times been reproduced, but perhaps the collected group of them here may be convenient for reference (Figs. 197 and 198). Each design shows a scene from the play, enclosed in a rather realistic framework—a delineation of the proscenium of the theatre. The first thing that strikes us is the elaborate decorations which made this theatre at Dorset Garden the most gorgeous of its time. Instead of Corinthian (or other) pillars, the proscenium arch is decorated with a formal pattern, and at the top there is a kind of half roof which may be a relic of the "heavens" of the early part of the century. Above this two figures, evidently representing Thalia and Melpomene, stand at each side of a curtained window with leaded sashes opening inward. Similar windows appear in the curves to the right and left of the emblematic statues. On the ledges underneath these two side windows are pictured a drum,

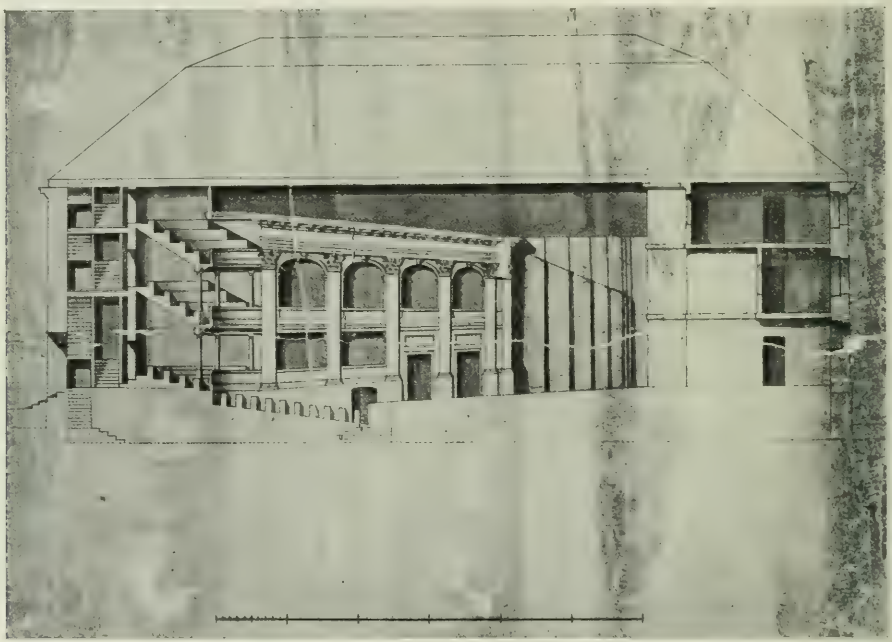

Fig. 194. Section of a Theatre, probably Drury Lane. Design by Sir Christopher Wren

From the original at All Souls College, Oxford.

a trumpet, and a violin, whence we may conclude that these were the windows of the music room. The drawing cuts off all but a few feet of the apron, but enough is left to show the edge of the ſtage boxes and the beginnings of the proscenium doors. Save for the presence of the music room, the arrangements were evidently not very different from those obtaining at the Theatre Royal.

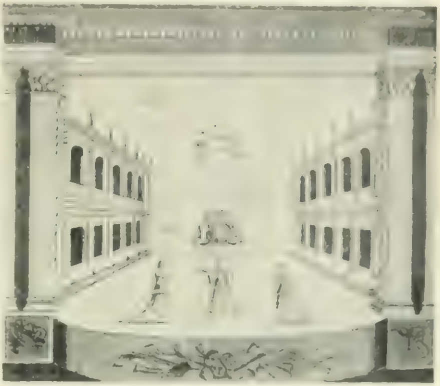

Fig. 195. FRONTISPIECE TO "ARIANE" (1674), AS PLAYED AT DRURY LANE

Countless references there are to the gorgeous appearance of this new house. Its managers professed that they were but seeking the good of the public; the managers of the rival Theatre Royal retorted by "odious" references to show and spectacle and meretricious splendour. After a time, of course, both theatres indulged in elaborate effects, but it was Dorset Garden theatre which at firſt led the way. In more respects than one it was the representative in London of the Parisian Salle des Machines, for, not only did the directors of the theatre look to the Continent for general inspiration, but they actually took or copied scenery which had been devised in Paris. The operas produced by Dryden and Shadwell and D'Urfey all had for their object the utilization of effects of the more spectacular kind, the description of which, with the many machines, cloud-breakings, and chair-sinkings, remind us irresiſtibly of descriptions of operatic performances at Bologna or at Paris.

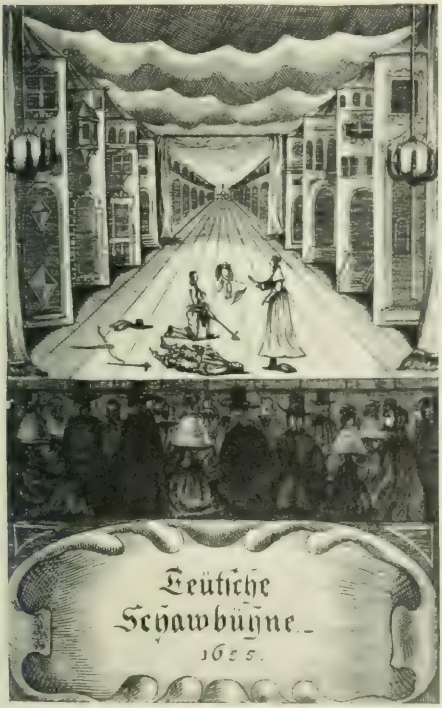

Fig. 196. A GERMAN SETTING OF 1655

To be compared with the frontispiece to *Ariane*, Fig. 195. Here the side-wings are clearly shown, and note should be taken of the candelabra over the ſtage-front.

From an exemplar in the Darmstadt Landesbibliothek.

(vii) TYPICAL SCENES AND THEATRICAL CONVENTIONS

It muſt not be supposed, of course, that for ordinary plays new scenery was painted. Both the Theatre Royal and the Duke's playhouse had sets of ſtock flats which muſt have been used over and over again. Glancing through the texts of the plays themselves, we realize that conventionalism reigned supreme. An opera might show surprising terraces and silver moons and poetic hells, but for tragedy there was the Grove, the Palace, the Temple; for comedy the Room, the Hall, the Garden, and the scene of London life. The Mall,

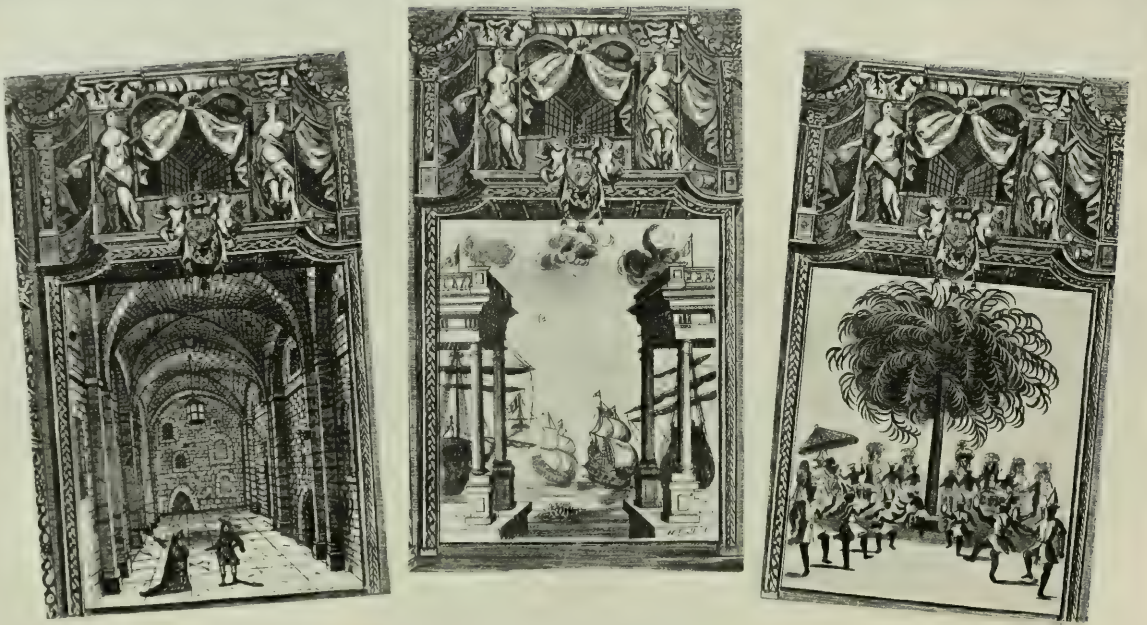

Fig. 197. THREE SETTINGS IN "THE EMPRESS OF MOROCCO" (1673)

St. James's Park, the New Spring Garden—all appear among the lighter plays of the period. The management must have constantly added to these stock scenes, but, working with a repertory of constantly changing plays, they obviously could not indulge in fresh scenery for each production, and frequently a spectacle from the opera, painted by an Aggas, a Streeter, a Stevenson, or a Robinson, may have been dragged in, tarnished and tawdry, for an ordinary show.

All these scenes, as has been noted above, were arranged by means of flats and back-shutters. The grooves for the former could serve for side-wings or else for scenes which ran together in the centre and thus gave an opportunity for the setting of a full-stage effect. In most of the plays of the time we can easily work out the scene plan in this manner, front stage and full sets alternating in regular series. That the box-set was not in use I am now inclined to regard as definitely proved. The curtain was hardly ever employed during the performance of a play, merely rising at the commencement of the action and falling at the close, so that the scene-shifting took place in full view of the spectators. It is obvious that, as the lights could not be lowered so easily as the electric globes in a modern playhouse, the audience was, at each change, rapidly rushed from locality to locality. Still further, actors could remain on the front apron while an alteration in setting was made behind so that they, without moving a step, had passed from one place to another. In many plays we find that some characters are bidden to go out or to move "within the scene," that is to say, behind the proscenium arch. Another character or other characters step forward on to the apron. Then the flats click together in the middle, shutting off those who had gone "within" and transporting those on the apron to an entirely new setting. I am not aware that this convention obtained on the Continent; it seems to be a relic of Elizabethan practice, itself based on medieval traditions.

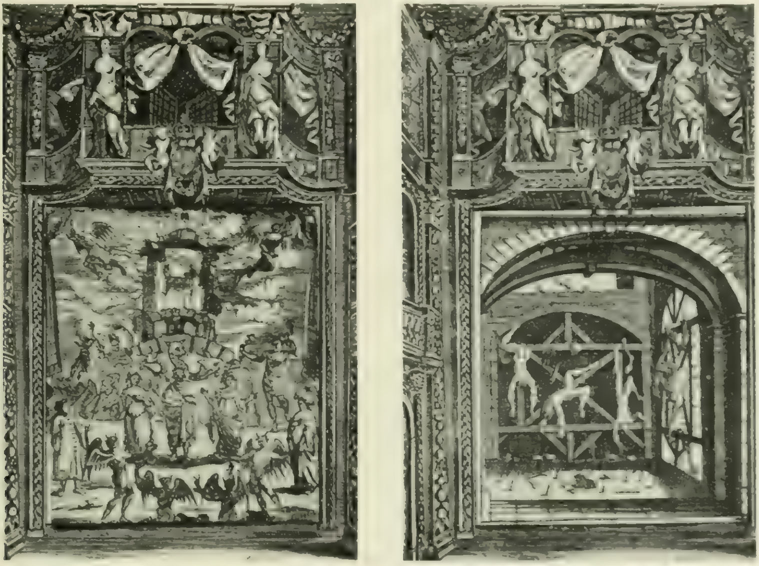

Fig. 198. Two Settings in "The Empress of Morocco" (1673)

(viii) The Proscenium Doors

It must have been observed that the typical Restoration playhouse differed from that of the Continent in that it possessed a wide and deep apron extending forward from the proscenium arch as far as the stage proper stretched behind. It is undoubted that this apron is a relic of the Elizabethan platform stage, the apron corresponding to the platform even as the stage within or beyond the proscenium arch corresponded to the inner room revealed through the central doorway. Just as in Italy the scene space developed out of the *periaktoi* set within the archways, so in England the scenic part of the stage developed from that room in which Shakespeare had shown Ferdinand and Miranda playing their amorous game at chess. The wide apron, however, made necessary a different technique for the actor. Clearly, a continual series of entrances and exits behind the proscenium arch would have been awkward, and accordingly there was retained that set of doors which had been typical of the Palladian theatre at Vicenza. There the arrangement of the scene wall had been rectangular. With Jones it became curved (Fig. 149). In the Restoration theatre the four doors were relegated to the *versurae* placed in a curve round, or at right angles to, the proscenium arch. Through these doors the actors normally came and went, the entrances sometimes marking a definite locality (*e.g.* the outside door of a house), sometimes being merely conventional means of getting upon or off the stage. These proscenium doors, then, are among the most important features of the Restoration stage. As many references of the early nineteenth century show, they gave the actors a special style, so that there was almost a mutiny when it was proposed to cut them down. Lingering on in provincial playhouses to within living memory, they serve to mark out a distinct break between the normal theatre of the Continent and the typical London playhouse.

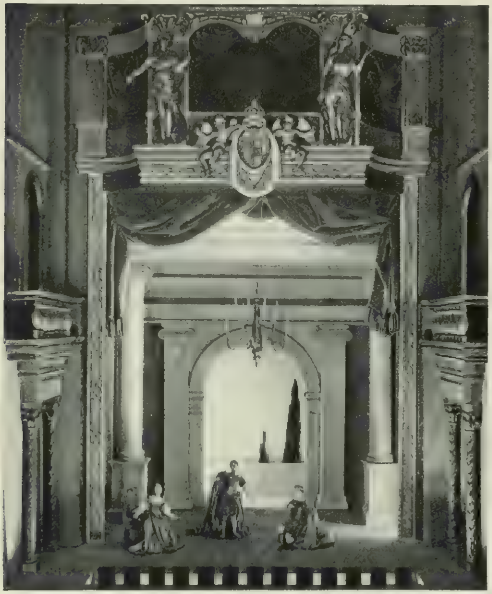

Fig. 199. Model of Dorset Garden Theatre by Herbert Norris

The setting is for a scene in Dryden's *All for Love.*

(ix) Actors and Actresses

For one other innovation the Restoration period is of importance. In Elizabethan days, as in classical Greece, all women's parts had been taken by boys. The Continent already had actresses in the late years of the sixteenth century, but a kind of Puritan conscience forbade their presence in London until the "Merry Monarch," Charles II, came to his own again. True, he had to profess that his authorizing of actresses arose out of a desire to promote morality in the theatre, but we may suspect that the wording of the warrant was more than a trifle cynical.

About 1661 the first woman actress—if we except Mrs Colman who sang the part of Ianthe in *The Siege of Rhodes* in 1656—appeared in the part of Desdemona with a prologue specially penned for her by the pageant-writer, Thomas Jordan. From this time on the boy-actor disappeared. Perhaps for the first few years actresses of talent were difficult to obtain, but soon a Mrs Davis with her nimble heels, a Nell Gwyn with her nimble tongue, a Mrs Barry with her tragic intensity, came to exercise a potent influence upon dramatic endeavour. Perhaps something of the new spirit which breathes through the comedy of manners comes from this source.

Both actresses and actors at this time were social figures of no mean importance. The society of a Betterton and a Harris was sought for by semi-courtiers such as Samuel Pepys, while a Nell Gwyn queened it at Whitehall. The audience of the Restoration period was, we must remember, small and select. Only two theatres were open from the early years of the age to 1682; from 1682 to 1695 one alone served the needs of London. As very often the actors could obtain 'houses' of a size barely sufficient to cover the cost of the candles, we may say that only the Court party, a comparatively small section of London's population, attended the playhouses. Elizabethan England had seen many public theatres open at one time in the metropolis, for then citizens as well as aristocrats patronized the performers. Now, however, Puritan sentiment prevailed among the middle classes, and the theatre was shunned by them because it breathed of that licence and flagrant immodesty which the gay Charles had brought back with him from France and Spain and Italy. In reality the Restoration playhouses were more akin in spirit to the strictly private theatres of Ferrara and of Paris than they were to their Elizabethan forerunners. A new type of aristocratic comedy and a new type of hopelessly heroic tragedy were the results. Remembering these facts, we must realize that there was much more direct intimacy in this theatre than there is in theatres of to-day. Probably three-quarters of the audience were personally acquainted with the actors and the actresses. The same spectators came day after day, and accordingly grew accustomed to idiosyncrasies of behaviour and of gesture. The actor was merged in the part, and as a consequence, when we read the Restoration dramatic literature in the light of the theatre, we can see why types were repeated over and over again. All those villains of Restoration tragedy are not villains of personality—they are but shadows of Sandford, an actor who, it is said, only once appeared in an honest part; and then was not allowed by his auditors to continue beyond the third act. So too all those merry maidens of Dryden's earlier fancy—they are not individualized pictures of girls of that age, but reveal in every movement, in every line, the form of bright-eyed Nell Gwyn, so soon to become a king's companion, to lose her art in luxury.

On this subject we cannot linger here, but it is one of which due account must be taken in our study of the main theatrical tendencies of the time.

CHAPTER X

THE ENGLISH THEATRES OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

(i) Audiences and Theatres

It is impossible, of course, to draw a sharp dividing line between the period 1660–1700 and the eighteenth century, but we are aided in making some kind of distinction because of the arrival of a new line of sovereigns, because of the emergence of a new type of writers, and because of the gradual disappearance of that peculiarly virulent Puritanism which still ruled in the hearts of many subjects of Charles II. In speaking of this period we must remember, of course, that we are dealing with a whole century and that we can in no way make generalizations covering the entirety of the period. On the other hand, some deductions can be made concerning the typical spectators of the time. In the first place, we note that, while the theatre still retained its air of fashion, the focus of public attention was no longer the Court. Anne rarely went to the public playhouses, and her successors, the Georges, for the most part followed her example. Moreover, a subtle change was coming over the aristocracy. Middle-class people were edging their way into the ranks from which hitherto they had been debarred, and, while the middle-class people aped a good deal the follies and the fashions of the more nobly born, they brought a new taste to the theatre. It is only by studying the gradual alteration in audience that we can explain the rising of the sentimental comedy and of the bourgeois tragedy. Lillo's *George Barnwell* could never have appealed to the spectators of 1670, and, conversely, no Wycherley or Congreve could arise to delight the hearts of eighteenth-century auditors. This is not to say that the same *blasé* air did not hang over at least one section of the theatre. From the early years of the century to the last we have reference to that aristocratic boredom which bestirred itself when a new play was being performed, so that parties repaired to the playhouse determined to mock the silly fool, the author, and damn his comedy or tragedy, whether it were good or bad. Perhaps mediocre dramatists of the time over-emphasized this aspect of the age, but that it existed in one form or another there can be not the slightest doubt. I feel certain that Bodens was painting from the life when, in *The Modish Couple* (1732), he drew the portrait of Grinly. This young gentleman is speaking to a companion of the playhouse, and says:

> I will wager you now five hundred Pounds that half a score of us shall quite demolish the best Piece that can come on any Stage. . . . Very well, Sir; but now comes our Time, for the third Act being begun; the first piece of wit that is utter'd, *Hiss* cry two or three of us—In a little time after, a stroke of Humour comes out, *hoh, hoh, hoh*, cry others. Then perhaps a serious Scene comes in Play, *Yaw* say the rest, and so on, till the Play is pretty well over. And for the last two or three Scenes, where the silly Rogue thinks he has shewn his Judgment the most, and on which the whole Business of the Piece depends, we strike up such a Chorus of *Cat-calls*, *Whistles*, *Hisses*, *Hoops*, and *Horse-laughs*, that not one of the Audience can hear a Syllable, and therefore charitably conclude it to be very sad Stuff.—The Epilogue's spoke, the Curtain falls, and so the poor Rascal is sent to the Devil.

Reading such a passage as this, can we wonder that authors preferred to write spectacular pieces, and that actors more and more inclined toward the pantomime where action took the place of dialogue and chequered Harlequin kept the audience in roars of good-humoured laughter? It was in this period that some of the traditions of the *commedia dell' arte* became thoroughly established in England; John Rich (Lun) made his name not as a regular performer in classical tragedy and comedy but as a nimble pantomimic actor. Successful plays of former times were reduced to forms which admitted the display of his genius, thus securing a new lease of life. Probably the most famous of all these shows, *Harlequin Dr Faustus*, was thus based ultimately upon Marlowe's sixteenth-century tragedy. These conditions are maintained throughout the whole of this century. Pantomime dominated even over David Garrick, and it was still flourishing in the nineteenth century. With it prospered the many comic operas and musical interludes and melodramas of the age.

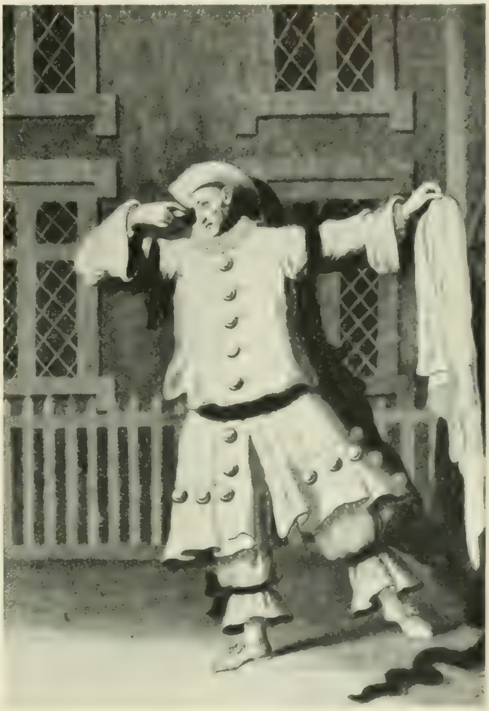
Fig. 200. Delpini as Pierrot at Sadler's Wells (early Nineteenth Century)

From a print in the British Museum

(ii) The Playhouses

All through the eighteenth century the two patent theatres maintained their position of complete or of partial monopoly. The Dorset Garden house was very early disused, largely, it would seem, because the acoustics were not all that could be desired. In its place rose the house employed by Betterton and his actors, a playhouse in Lincoln's Inn Fields built in the old tennis court which had once housed D'Avenant's players. During the early part of the century Drury Lane and another small theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields (opened in 1714) were the privileged houses; after 1732 Covent Garden took the place of the latter. These two theatres, however, were rivalled by many another. Without taking into account the booths at Bartholomew Fair, May Fair, and Southwark Fair, or the later places of entertainment such as Sadler's Wells, the Royal Grove, and the Royal Circus, we find before the passing of the Licensing Act in 1737 the presence of a small theatre in the Haymarket and of a theatre at Goodman's Fields. The Licensing Act theoretically closed every playhouse save those at Drury Lane and Covent Garden, but in various ways the managers of the minor houses succeeded in evading the law, while Samuel Foote, in the latter years of the century, was given a special licence for summer performances at the little theatre (Theatre Royal) in the Haymarket. Nor must we forget the opera house. Italian lyric drama had been introduced into London during the first years of the eighteenth century and soon had gripped the attention of the fashionable part of the town. A home for it was found in the large Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket, built by Vanbrugh in 1705 for regular plays, but soon abandoned for that purpose. In spite of frequent financial losses due to the enormous salaries which the singers demanded, the managers of this house—a motley crew—struggled on year after year, bringing to England some of the finest Italian voices and the most famous Italian operas. It was here that G. F. Handel reigned supreme in the mid years of the century.

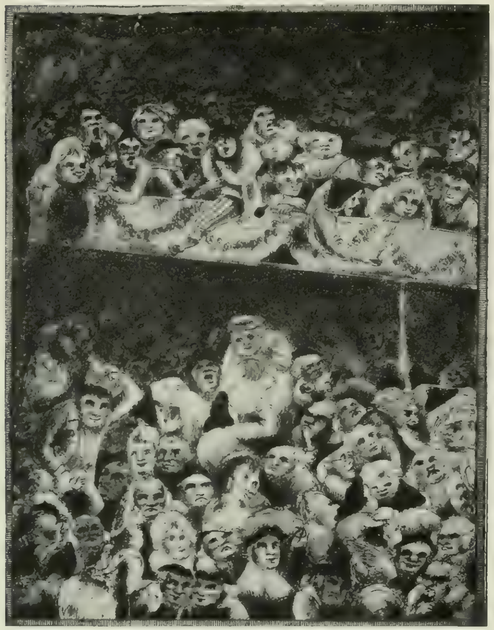

Fig. 201. The Audience at Sadler's Wells

From a water-colour sketch in the British Museum.

It is useless to enter more fully into the stage history of the time; enough has been said to show that London, in spite of fettering restrictions, was much more adequately supplied with houses of entertainment than it had been in the Restoration period; a new audience was being born.

(iii) The Proscenium Doors

One of the most important changes made in the structure of the new or of the altered theatres was the cutting away of one pair of proscenium doors. About 1696, Colley Cibber tells us, Rich, the manager of Drury Lane, determined on a modification of the original Wren plan.

> It must be observ'd . . . that the Area or Platform of the old Stage projected about four Foot forwarder, in a Semi-oval figure, parallel to the Benches of the Pit [*i.e.* in earlier times]; and that the former lower Doors of Entrance for the Actors were brought down between the two foremost (and then only) Pilasters, in the place of which Doors now the two Stage Boxes are fixt. That where the Doors of Entrance now are, there formerly stood two additional Side Wings, in front to a full Set of Scenes, which had then almost a double Effect in their Loftiness and Magnificence.
>
> By this Original form the usual Station of the Actors, in almost every Scene, was advanc'd at least ten Foot nearer the Audience than they now can be, because, not only from the Stage's being shorten'd in front, but likewise from the additional Interposition of those Stage Boxes, the Actors (in respect to the Spectators that filled them) are kept so much more backward from the main audience than they us'd to be; but when the Actors were in possession of that forwarder Space to advance upon, the Voice was then more in the Centre of the House, so that the most distant Ear had scarce the least Doubt or Difficulty in hearing what fell from the weakest Utterance.

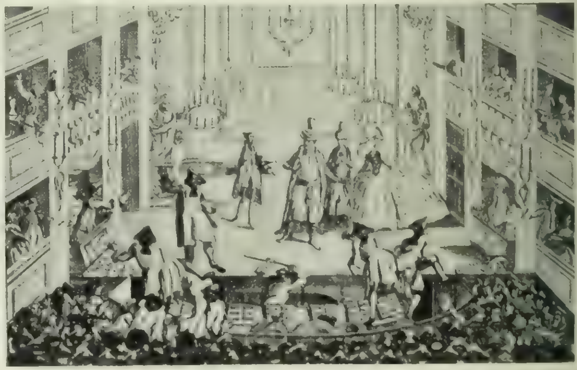

Fig. 202. The Fitzgiggo Riot, 1763

Note may be taken of the Eastern costumes of the two central figures (*cp.* Figs. 220 to 225), and also of the methods of illumination.

From Cibber's account we can see what happened. The front, or lower, door on each side was converted into a stage box, while behind the proscenium arch—so great was the force of tradition—were built two other doors. The "former" upper doors now became the lower doors. The arrangement of these is well shown in the prints which illustrate the Fitzgiggo riots of 1763 (Fig. 202). Here the stage boxes are plainly apparent, with the doors behind them. This change naturally brought about a shortening of the apron, and a few minor innovations in the general disposition of the stage-front. At the Royalty Theatre in 1787 (Fig. 203) the doors are set slantwise from the curving sides of the boxes, reminding us a trifle of Jones' proscenium for a Court theatre (Fig. 150). It may be observed that in the Royalty Theatre the boxes over the doors had latticed windows much in the style of the music room at Dorset Garden. In a cross-section of the Haymarket Theatre (Fig. 204) we are again shown obliquely set doorways with windows above. Attention may be drawn to the fact that here the windows would be of practically no use for spectators, as they almost directly face the auditorium. They were, no doubt, reserved for actors only, as in Elizabethan times.

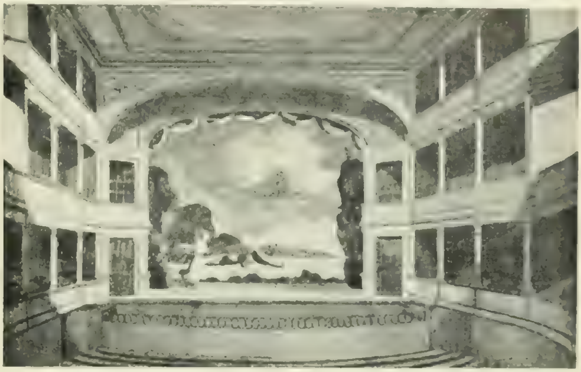

Fig. 203. The Royalty Theatre, 1787

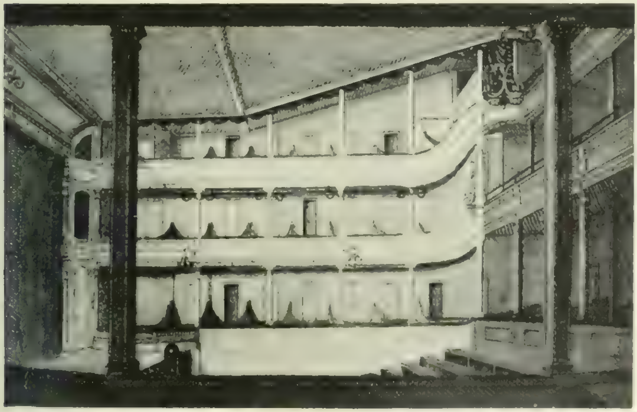

Fig. 204. Cross-section of the Haymarket Theatre, 1807

(iv) The Mise-en-Scène

In the matter of scenery the eighteenth-century managers, at least up to the latter years of the period, continued on the way mapped out for them in earlier times. We can still trace the Palace, Grove, Garden, Temple, and Prison scenes which were conventionally employed for tragedy and for opera, although pantomime gave an impetus to the origination of new theatrical machines and delighted in all that was new and costly and wonderful. There seems, however, to have been less experimentation even on machines than there had been in Restoration times. For general purposes we may assume until 1760 the continuance of those methods and those devices which had been employed in Betterton's theatre.

After 1760, however, some new spirit entered into the playhouse. Romanticism in the world of literature was by this time well under way, and was leading men to seek for something different from the conventionalism of pseudo-classic art. Some sought for truth in a new realism, looking at nature direct and not through the medium of antique description; others sought for it in imaginative realms where gloomy mountains and ruined Gothic cathedrals played a dominant part. Realism, with a delight in the majestically grand, and a general reaction to Augustan conventionalism ever mark the romantic movement. Remembering this, we can easily explain the various tendencies in late eighteenth-century scenic design.

First perhaps may be chronicled new methods of securing the effects. Up to 1760, and, of course, sporadically thereafter, most English settings had been made up of side-wings and back-shutters. Thus, when a room was shown upon the stage, the walls at the side were conventionally marked by two or three of these side-wings set in the manner established by Inigo Jones in the early seventeenth century and used, as we have seen, by Juvarra in the eighteenth century. With the advent of realism, however, men began to see flaws in this conventional arrangement. Rooms in ordinary houses did not look like that, and so was originated the box set. That this box set did not completely supplant the old is amply proved by a glance at many engravings of the period. Fig. 205 will give a suggestion of the older method.

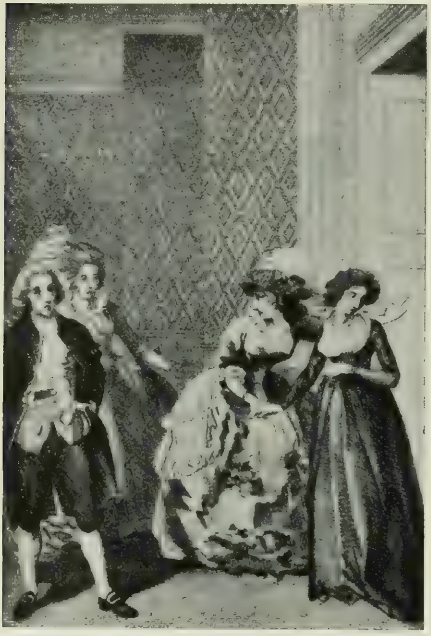

Fig. 205. SCENE IN "THE HEIRESS" (1786)
This shows well the arrangement of side-wings to represent an interior.
From Odell, *Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving.*

Shortly after the introduction of the box set came the reintroduction of the built-up set. When side-wings and shutters were devised, men forgot the older devices employed by Serlio and Mahelot. Flats alone were used. Toward the end of the eighteenth century the desire for realism convinced the managers that merely painted rocks were not sufficient, and so came back the ancient frames covered with canvas. Quite obviously, the opportunities of the scenic designer were becoming more ample.

New devices, however, are really of less importance than new styles of treatment, and of these there were several during the last years of the century. In general, we may say that the romantic movement led men away from Augustan conventionalism, but obviously a reaction to conventionalism may take one of many forms. It may strive toward the capturing of archaeological correctness, or it may endeavour to reproduce the living shapes of nature. Whichever form it may assume, it still strives against that conventionalism which is present in neo-classic art. Of the two main tendencies of the age that heralded by William Capon (1757–1827) is probably the more important. Capon's predilections were all on the side of antiquarianism, which, it is true, had been gaining ground for some few years in the theatre. For the new Theatre Royal opened on April 21, 1794, Capon executed a number of special scenes, obviously destined to become stock properties, but displaying what were then novel features. The artist based his designs for these upon ancient Gothic architecture, striking thus away from the would-be classical temples and palaces favoured in England and on the Continent since the time of Serlio. The "Ancient Palace of Westminster" as it had been at the close of the fifteenth century formed one of these settings; the Tower of London in the time of Richard III was another; while various street scenes were devised out of faithful reproductions of a series of picturesque Elizabethan houses. Most of these original flats or drop-curtains were intended for the revival of Shakespeare's plays—for J. P. Kemble was then in charge of Drury Lane—but various contemporary dramatists gave the artist ample opportunity to display his skill. George Colman the younger thus provided him with *The Iron Chest* (Drury Lane, 1796) set in the reign of Edward IV, while M. G. Lewis indirectly aided him through his novel, *The Monk*, which was dramatized by Boaden as *Aurelio and Miranda*. Here obviously was material for illustration in gloomy Gothic style. When Kemble occupied Covent Garden in 1809 Capon continued the same style of work there; the accompanying design of a street scene will give some idea of the general effects at which he aimed (Fig. 206).

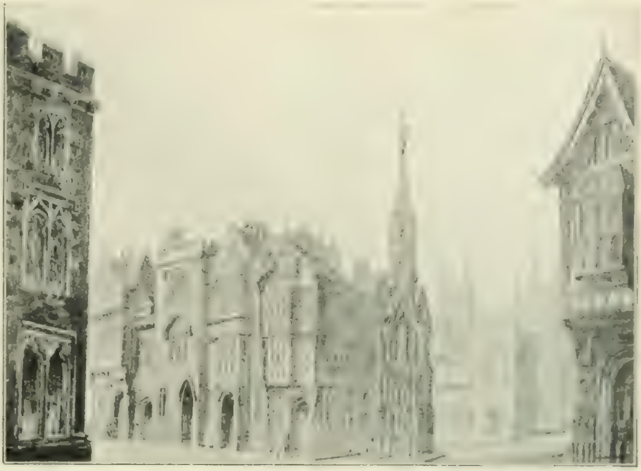

Fig. 206. Ancient Street Scene for John Kemble's Shakespearian Revivals at Covent Garden, 1809. Design by William Capon

From *The Magazine of Art*.

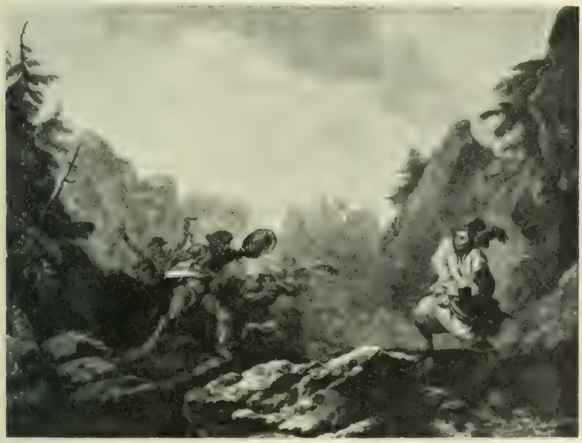

Fig. 207. Scene for "A Christmas Tale" (1776) by Loutherbourg

From Odell, *op. cit.*

The second tendency of the period is more clearly 'romantic' in the ordinarily accepted sense of the term, and may be associated with the scenic art of Loutherbourg (about 1735–1812), an Alsatian, who was engaged by David Garrick for Drury Lane some twenty years before Capon worked there. Loutherbourg, it is true, worked mainly in the region of the 'Entertainment' and of pantomime, but his importance cannot be underestimated when we consider his later influence. Loutherbourg was a romantic realist. A tour in Derbyshire provided him with a series of sketches from which he designed the scenery

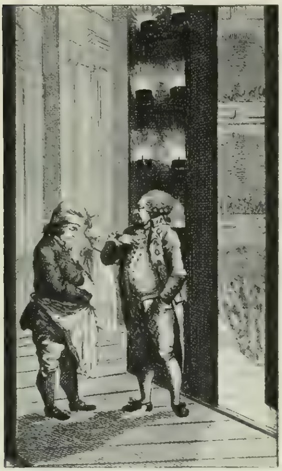

Fig. 208. Side Lighting in a German Theatre, 1790

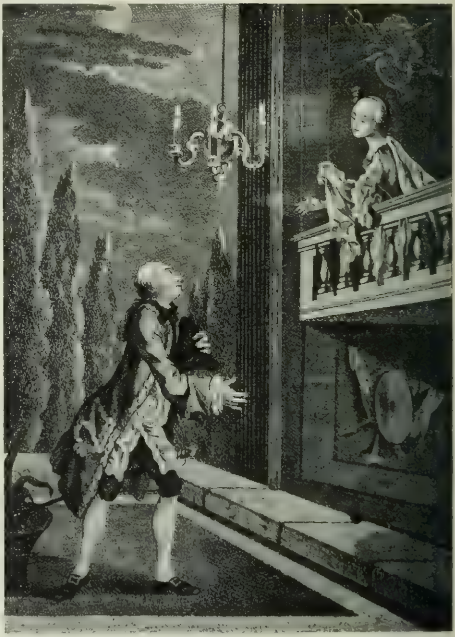

Fig. 209. Romeo and Juliet in the Eighteenth Century

From a print in the possession of Mr Herbert Norris.

for *The Wonders of Derbyshire, or Harlequin in the Peak*, produced at Drury Lane in 1779, while Garrick's *A Christmas Tale* (Drury Lane, 1776) evidently allowed of free scenic embellishment in the same style (Fig. 207). Palaces, mountains, catacombs he produced in regular series, winning on all sides applause for his work. That applause came not merely because of his sense of artistic proportion and because of his skill as a draughtsman. He proved himself in every way a genius in his own sphere, introducing many novelties from the Continent and inventing many scenic devices himself. Thus his effects were secured by means other than the then usual back-shutter and triangularly arranged side-wings. For O'Keeffe's pantomimic piece called *Omai* he executed scenery which evidently attracted attention. According to the author,

> he had previously invented transparent scenery—moonshine, sunshine, fire, volcanoes, etc.—as also breaking the scene into several pieces by the laws of perspective, showing miles and miles distance. Before his time, the back was one broad flat, the whole breadth and height of the stage.

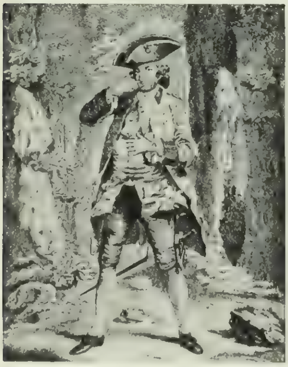

Fig. 210. Woodward as Mercutio

From Odell, *op. cit.*

This "breaking the scene," particularly with the use of built-up scenery, seems to have been Loutherbourg's chief innovation, but the transparent scenes and the scenes of elemental effects were also highly applauded. He busied himself too with various methods of simulating thunder and lightning, and was one of the very first in England to give due care to the illumination of his scenes. Coloured or stained glass he used regularly for his lamps, and it is said that for the *Eidophuskion*, a spectacular entertainment devised by him in Spring Gardens, he went so far as to remove the now habitual footlights, illuminating his scenes from the top and the sides. This *Eidophuskion* made a considerable appeal to contemporaries, so that when Kean revived *King Lear* in 1820 he had in it "A Land Storm. After the manner of *Loutherbourg's Eidophuskion*," in which a most realistic storm howled round the head of the aged King.

It is impossible and unnecessary here to speak in greater detail of the exact means by which Loutherbourg and others secured their effects. We are dealing here with main tendencies only, and those have been sufficiently outlined in the preceding sections.

(v) COSTUME

It is necessary, however, to present a broad and selective survey of stage costume during these years. As a general rule, it may be stated broadly that up to 1760 or 1770 practically no attempt was made to secure historical accuracy in the dressing of various characters; but it must not be presumed that eighteenth-century, or, for that matter Elizabethan, performers habitually wore the garments of their own day. Rather, we may say, there was a definite convention in stage-costuming which, originated in the late sixteenth century, was passed on with minor modifications to the time of Garrick.

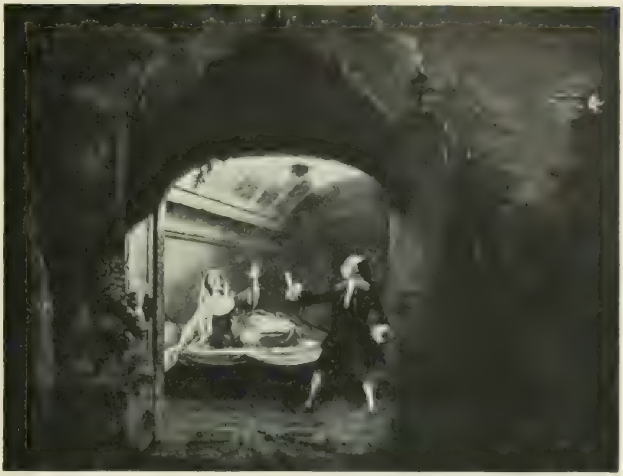

Fig. 211. GARRICK AND MISS BELLAMY AS ROMEO AND JULIET

Note should be taken of the 'romantic' setting in this and in Fig. 212

From an engraving by Ravenel after Wilson, 1763.

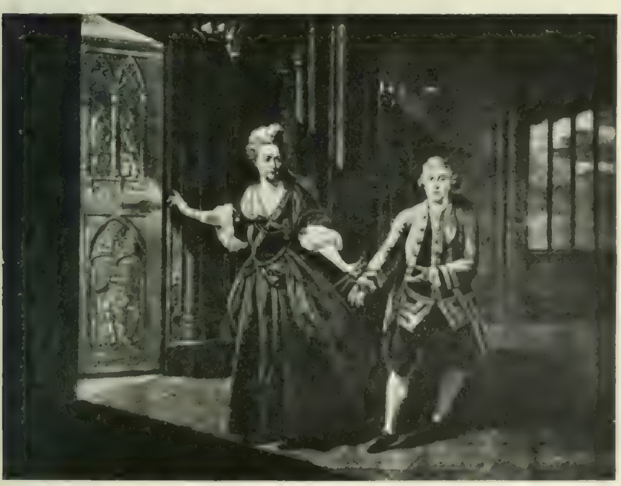

Fig. 212. GARRICK AND MRS PRITCHARD AS MACBETH AND LADY MACBETH

From a mezzotint by Green after Zoffany, 1776.

Looking at the theatrical prints of these years, we easily distinguish several sets of costumes for actors—actresses, be it noted, had a system all of their own.[1] We find (1) costumes of the day, (2) costumes *à la romaine*, (3) costumes for Eastern potentates, and (4) special costumes used mainly for Shakespearian plays. Comedy here we need not consider, for comic plays usually were 'clothed' in the most fashionable garments of the period, nor need we consider pastorals, where fantastic garments of one sort or another—not always very Arcadian—were regularly worn. Our survey must be one of tragic types.

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[1] *Infra*, p. 182.

(1) The ordinary clothes of the time are shown in a number of eighteenth-century prints. Mercutio (Fig. 210) is generally a fashionable man of the time, as, in their own ways, are Romeo (Fig. 211) and Macbeth (Figs. 212 and 213). Hamlet is regularly habited in a contemporary but sombre suit of black as in the character-print of Henderson (Fig. 214). The list of examples, of course, might be increased a hundredfold, but it may be assumed that knee-breeches, coat, and cravat were regularly used by the actors taking those parts.

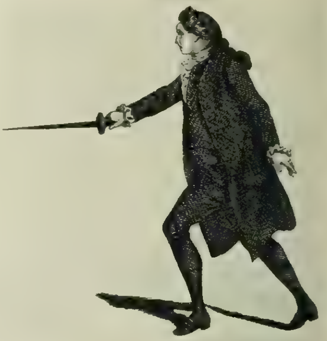
Fig. 214. Henderson as Hamlet, 1776

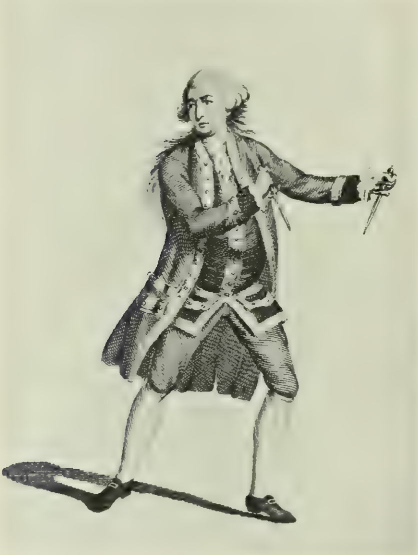
Fig. 213. Garrick as Macbeth

(2) When a Roman play was in question, however, there entered in that semi-classical costume which we have seen already adumbrated in Elizabethan times. Sometimes it is fairly accurate, sometimes it consists of little more than a breastplate and a plumed helmet. Various 'styles' are shown here in the accompanying set of prints (Figs. 216, 218–220).[1] Thus was Antony and thus was Julius Caesar habited.

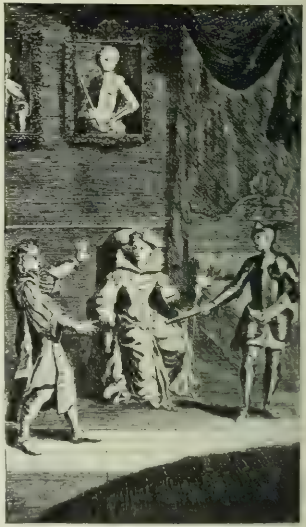
Fig. 215. Frontispiece to Rowe's "Hamlet" (1709)

(3) Eastern heroes also wore plumes on occasion, but they had besides a very special costume of their own. The prints are so unanimous that we are bound to assume a definite continuity of tradition. Bannister as Zaphna in Miller's *Mahomet* wears tight-fitting boots, roomy breeches, a sash, and a long dressing-gown-like coat, trimmed with fur. A plumed turban completes his outfit (Fig. 217). As Hippolitus Lewis has the roomy trousers, the boots, and the coat, adding a curved scimitar. A peculiar turban sits on his head (Fig. 223). Mossop as Bajazet lacks the boots but has the other features identical (Fig. 222), while Barry as Othello varies the costume only by the adoption of an Indian tunic instead of the breeches (Fig. 226). Benson as Timurkan, later in the century (Fig. 225), while

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[1] Compare also the frontispiece to Addison's *Cato*, reproduced in *British Drama*.

trying to secure Chinese local colour, obviously has remembered some of the outstanding peculiarities in the dress of his predecessors. These prints may be regarded as typical, and from them we may deduce the fact that Othello, like other Eastern characters, regularly appeared in a conventional costume which included Central Asian boots, Turkish trousers or Indian tunic, sash of Arabia, furred coat of doubtful origin, and turban of India. The curved scimitar was associated with the type even in Shakespeare's earliest days.[1]

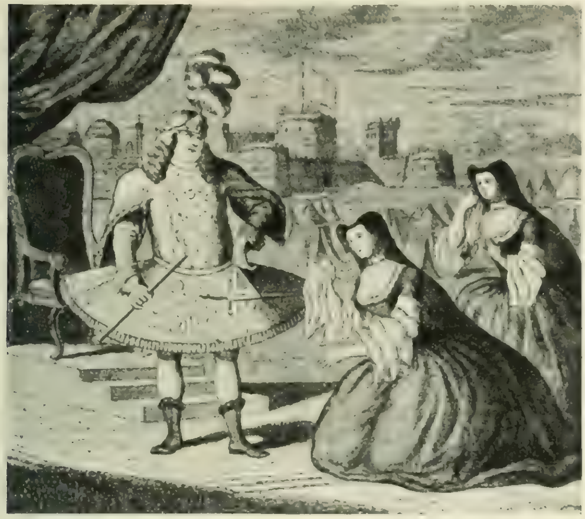

Fig. 216. QUIN AS CORIOLANUS, 1749

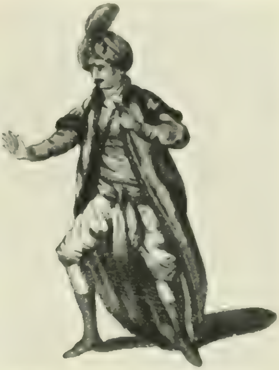

Fig. 217. BANNISTER AS ZAPHNA, 1778

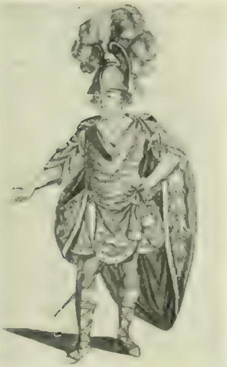

Fig. 218. GARRICK AS DEMETRIUS, 1777

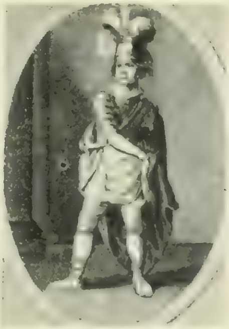

Fig. 219. MURRAY AS DEMETRIUS, 1797

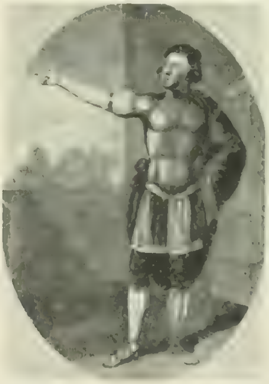

Fig. 220. LEWIS AS PHARNACES, 1795

Clearly this costume has considerable value, for do the eighteenth-century prints not preserve the main features of the original costume worn by the actor who created Othello in the early years of the seventeenth century? Traditionalism, we must remember, ruled dominant in the theatre till 1800.

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[1] *Supra*, p. 137.

(4) It is a most strange fact that for Shakespeare's plays certain characters were dressed in garments peculiar to themselves even while others in the same drama wore contemporary costumes. Let us take as an example the popular type of Falstaff. In the library of the Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth there is a sketch by Inigo Jones made for the Brachmani in Sir William D'Avenant's masque *The Temple of Love* (1635). One of the figures there has a hat with an upturned brim and a long gown or cloak with full sleeves. The interest of the sketch consists in a note inscribed by the artist in which he describes

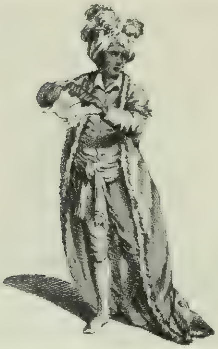

Fig. 221. MOSSOP AS ZANGA, 1776

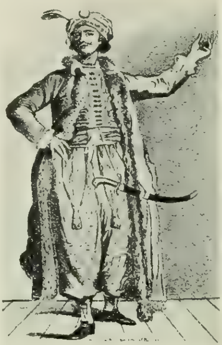

Fig. 222. MOSSOP AS BAJAZET, 1778

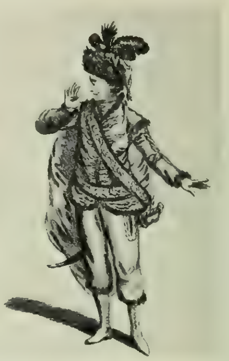

Fig. 223. LEWIS AS HIPPOLITUS, 1777

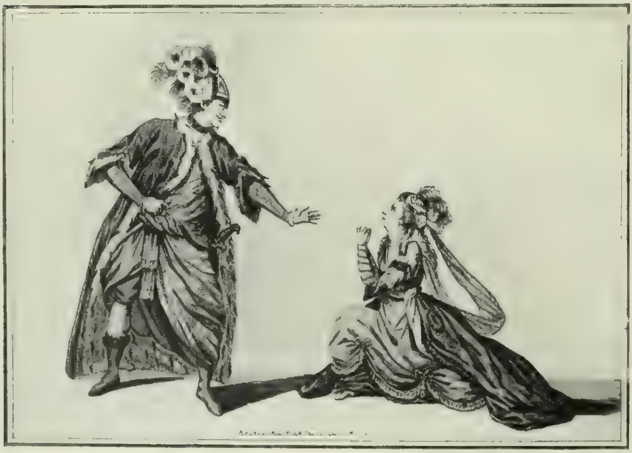

Fig. 224. BARRY AND MRS BARRY AS BAJAZET AND SELIMA, 1776

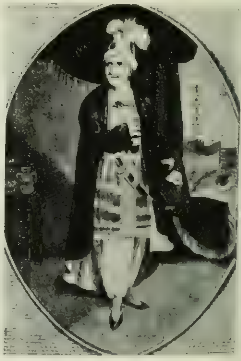

Fig. 225. BENSON AS TIMURKAN, 1796

> a roabe of russet Girt low w^{t} a great belley like a swoln mã long mistchaheos [moustaches] the sleeue shorte . . . buskines to shew a great swolen lege on his head a capp cōming fourth beefore like a peake . . . a hood gatherd behind a great head and balde,

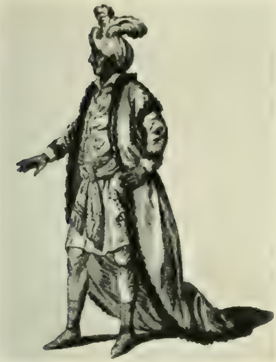

Fig. 226. Barry as Othello, 1777

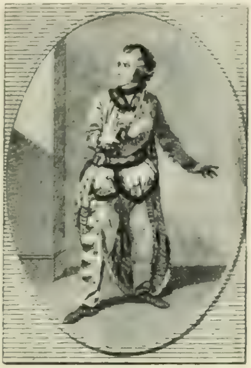

Fig. 227. Pope as Varanes, 1793

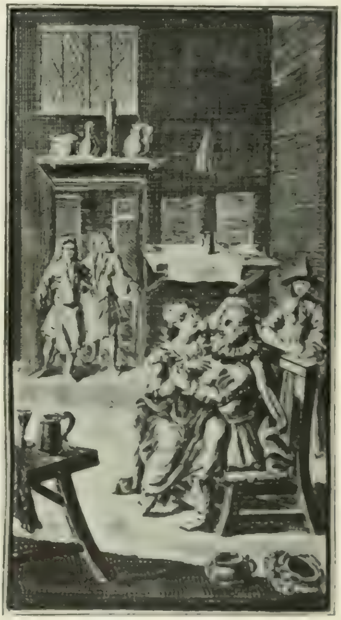

Fig. 228. Frontispiece to Rowe's "Henry IV, Part II"

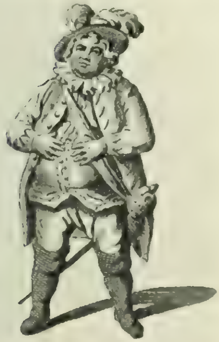

Fig. 229. Henderson as Falstaff, 1778

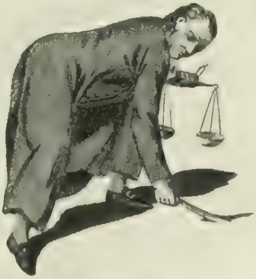

Fig. 230. Macklin as Shylock, 1777

and then, most important of all, "like a S^{r} Jon fall staff." We next turn to the early eighteenth century and see Falstaff in *Henry IV, Part II.* He has the large buskins, an Elizabethan collar, a cloak, and a wigless head, although his two companions are dressed in eighteenth-century style (Fig. 228). Later still, in 1778, his costume is fundamentally the same, except that the cloak has given way to a coat of semi-Georgian cut (Fig. 229). The hat, the collar, and the boots are there, so that we feel assured that we are in the presence of one of the essentially traditional Shakespearian costumes. Shylock is another figure who is honoured with a special dress. The two prints of Macklin in this rôle, with the long black 'gaberdine' and the white necktie (Figs. 230 and 231), give a fair idea of its main features. Special note should be taken in Fig. 231 of the fact that while Antonio and Bassanio wear eighteenth-century costume with wigs, Shylock is wigless. The wigless types are the traditional ones. Among the other characters who wear peculiar costumes may be mentioned Dromio in *The Comedy of Errors* (Fig. 232), Posthumus in

Cymbeline (Fig. 233), and King Lear (Fig. 234). The laſt-mentioned is clad in knee-breeches of the period, a white shirt, and a peculiar coat trimmed with ermine. No explanation can be offered for the curious fact that Lear was thus diſtinguished while Macbeth appeared in ordinary contemporary dress; that is one of the ſtrange elements in a ſtage tradition which undoubtedly takes us back to Shakespeare's time.

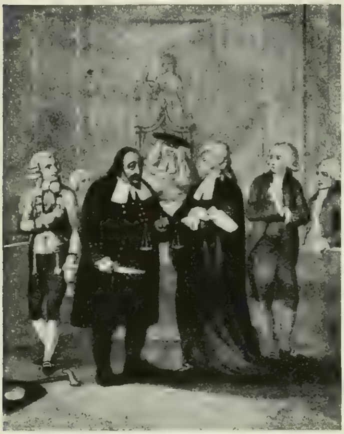
Fig. 231. Macklin as Shylock
From an engraving by Nutter after Boyne.

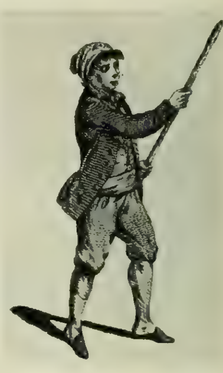
Fig. 232. Brunsden as Dromio, 1779

The actresses moſtly took their own line, one dictated to them by the fact that they did not wish to appear in anything but the moſt fashionable dress of their time. While Barry as Bajazet (Fig. 224) wears Eaſtern coſtume, Mrs Barry as Selima is clad in a coſtume of the eighteenth century. Mrs Hartley as Cleopatra (Fig. 235), the same actress as Andromache (Fig. 236), Miss Younge as Meröpe (Fig. 237), Mrs Oldfield as Rosamond (Fig. 238), Mrs Melmoth as Queen Elizabeth (Fig. 239)—they all wore garments of the same type. A few exceptions, however, muſt be noted. We need not here dwell on the Indian coſtume of feathers which Mrs Behn gave the theatre in the early years of the Reſtoration, but we may note the fact that Mrs Quickly, Doll Tearsheet, and their crew seem to have worn coſtumes which carry us back to Elizabethan days. In Fig. 228 they are sufficiently diſtinguished in this way. Mrs Woffington as Mistress Ford (Fig. 240) seems also to retain something of earlier dress. The actresses, however, rarely liked thus to diſtinguish themselves, and long after the time when Mrs Siddons ſtarted the fashion for 'Grecian' draperies we find the women playing in contemporary coſtumes while the men were hiſtorically clad. Miss Wallis as Palmira (Fig. 241) marks about the furtheſt limit to which they allowed themselves to venture.

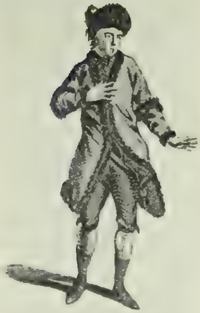
Fig. 233. Reddish as Posthumus, 1777

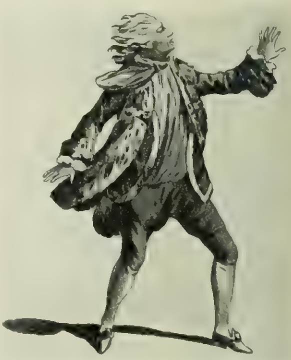
Fig. 234. Garrick as King Lear, 1779

About the sixties or the seventies in England, however, changes in the traditional coſtuming began to creep in, the dresses being thus brought gradually into harmony with the new scenic effects. These changes, of course, did not come into being in one decade: indeed they had been heralded years before their actual introduction by theoriſts both in England and on the Continent. In the early Renascence period de'

Sommi[1] had suggested the advisability of dressing characters in accordance with historical fashions, but de' Sommi in many ways was a lonely prophet with ideas far beyond those of his own time. The demand seems next to have been made in the preface to Antonio Conti's *Il Cesare* (1718), and was repeated by the later dramatist Martelli.[2] Possibly it was from these men that Gottsched in Germany took his ideas. About 1741 this playwright-theorist persuaded the actress Carolina Neuber to put on *Der sterbende Caton* with classical costumes, but unfortunately the effort was not successful, the audience treating the whole affair as an excellent joke. No doubt the English dramatist Aaron Hill may also have known of Conti's and Martelli's proposals, for he was deeply interested in the Italian opera of the age; at any rate in October 1724 he enunciates a similar suggestion for productions in London theatres. For a play of his own in 1731 he sketched "a few light drawings," beautiful and inexpensive, yet presenting "a novelty in the old Saxon dresses." A decade later Macklin seems to have been thinking about accuracy in costume, and it was he who, in 1772, caused a revolution in method by habiting Macbeth in a kilt. Garrick himself grew

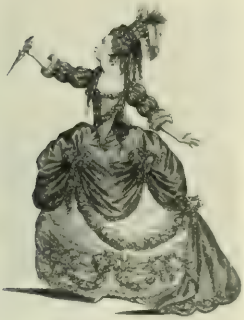

Fig. 235. Mrs Hartley as Cleopatra, 1776

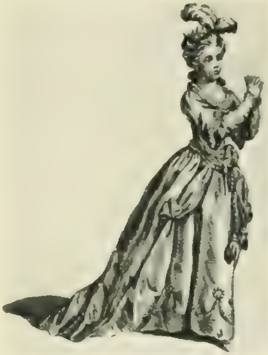

Fig. 236. Mrs Hartley as Andromache, 1777

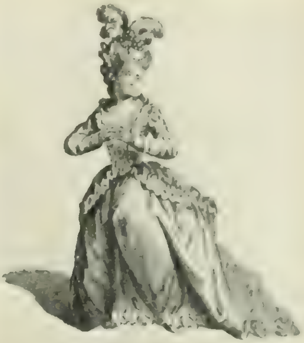

Fig. 237. Miss Younge as Merope, 1777

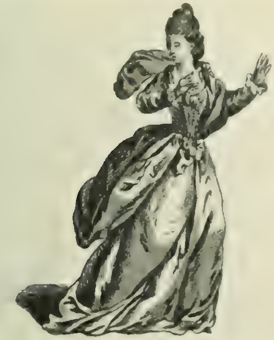

Fig. 238. Mrs Oldfield as Rosamond, 1778

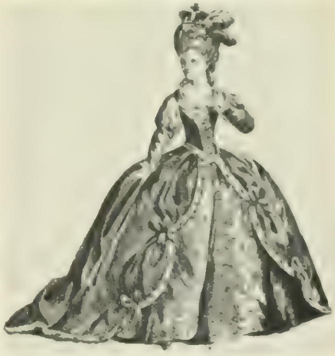

Fig. 239. Mrs Melmoth as Queen Elizabeth, 1779

interested in the innovation, and capped Macklin's experiment by providing "ancient British" costumes for *King Lear*.

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[1] See Appendix B.

[2] On this see J. G. Robertson's *The Genesis of Romantic Theory*, p. [illegible]

A further study of the development of this historical costuming must be reserved for the next section;[1] here it may be noted that up to 1800 the results achieved were not always as perfect or as complete as the play-bills would lead us to imagine. Many contemporary records prove to us that it was often only the 'star' who boasted the 'correct' garments, the rest of the company being furnished with costumes "which had done service for other times and for other nations." Macklin, Garrick, and Kemble all seem to have been guilty of this hopelessly reprehensible vice which is the peculiar property of stars—of all times and of all nations. Similarly, the contemporary records show that by 'historical' the managers of this time meant merely "not conventional or contemporary." If Henry IV was clad in the gown which a real Henry VI might have worn all was well; Edwardian, Henrician and 'ancient British' costumes might often serve to costume heroes of any one time.

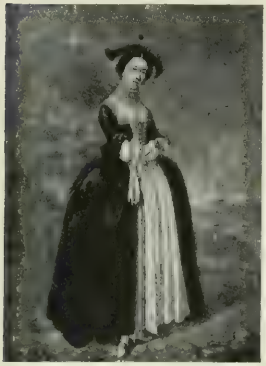

Fig. 240. MRS WOFFINGTON AS MISTRESS FORD

From a mezzotint by Faber after Haytley.

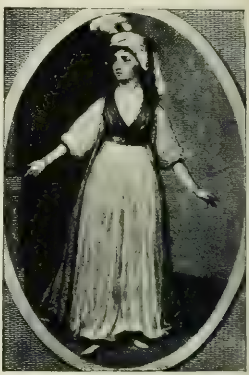

Fig. 241. MISS WALLIS AS PALMIRA, 1795

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[1] See p. 191.

CHAPTER XI

THE THEATRES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

(i) The Theatres

THE nineteenth century as a whole gave little to scenic artistry. This categorical statement, of course, will require a certain amount of qualification, but the fact remains that the period merely carried on traditions which had been set in the ages which preceded. Gas and, later, electricity gave new instruments to the managers, but the careful placing of the means of illumination, the blending of colours, and the general artistic effects to be secured thereby had occupied the minds of many men from the times of Serlio and of Inigo Jones to those of Loutherbourg. 'Transparent' scenery, gauze, and all the various tricks of the scenic art had been tried long before the vaunted triumphs of the eighties and the nineties. Still, however far the pioneer work had been carried by previous artists, we must not by any means despise the nineteenth-century theatre. It had for the most part an honest aim, and it succeeded in realizing, at least partially, its desires.

There is not much necessity here to chronicle the tumultuous stage history of the period, but attention may be drawn to one or two of the most salient characteristics of the theatres of the time. From the beginning of the century to the end there was a tendency toward the enlarged house. Drury Lane had been entirely rebuilt in 1794, with a vastly increased seating capacity—nay, planned "upon a much larger scale than that of any other theatre in Europe." It had a proscenium opening of 43 feet by 38, with a stage depth of no less than 92 feet. This gorgeous structure, which aroused contemporaries to paeans of admiration and surprise, was burnt to the ground on February 24, 1809, and three years later (1812) was opened the present Theatre Royal, with a proscenium opening of 33 feet and a seating capacity of well over 3200. It may be remarked that, while the acoustic properties of this theatre are now excellent, those of the original playhouse built in 1812 were far from being so. Alterations were made both in 1814 and in 1821 for the purpose of improving the defects. The respective playhouses in Drury Lane may well be studied in Figs. 242, 243, and 244.

A new Covent Garden too rose in 1809 out of the ashes of the old house, which had been destroyed by fire on September 20, 1808; it also was considerably larger than the theatre the place of which it took. The auditorium was 51 feet by 52, with four tiers, each containing twenty-six boxes. The width of the proscenium was 42 feet with a height of 36, while the stage itself was 68 feet by 82. It held some 2800 or 3000 spectators (Fig. 245).

This tendency toward the use of a large theatre was, of course, countered to a certain extent by the 'minor' playhouses, which naturally increased rapidly in importance after the new bill destroying the monopoly of the patent theatres was passed in 1843. Even before this date, however, Sadler's Wells, Astley's Amphitheatre, and the Royalty competed not unfavourably with Drury Lane, Covent Garden, and the Italian Opera. In 1810 a special licence for "English Opera" was granted to Arnold for the Lyceum, while other 'minors' spectacularly displayed melodrama and farce. It would take pages here to chronicle the mere advent of the many houses—Princess's, His Majesty's, Royalty, Prince of Wales's, and what not—which were erected during the last years of the century or in the first years of our own period.

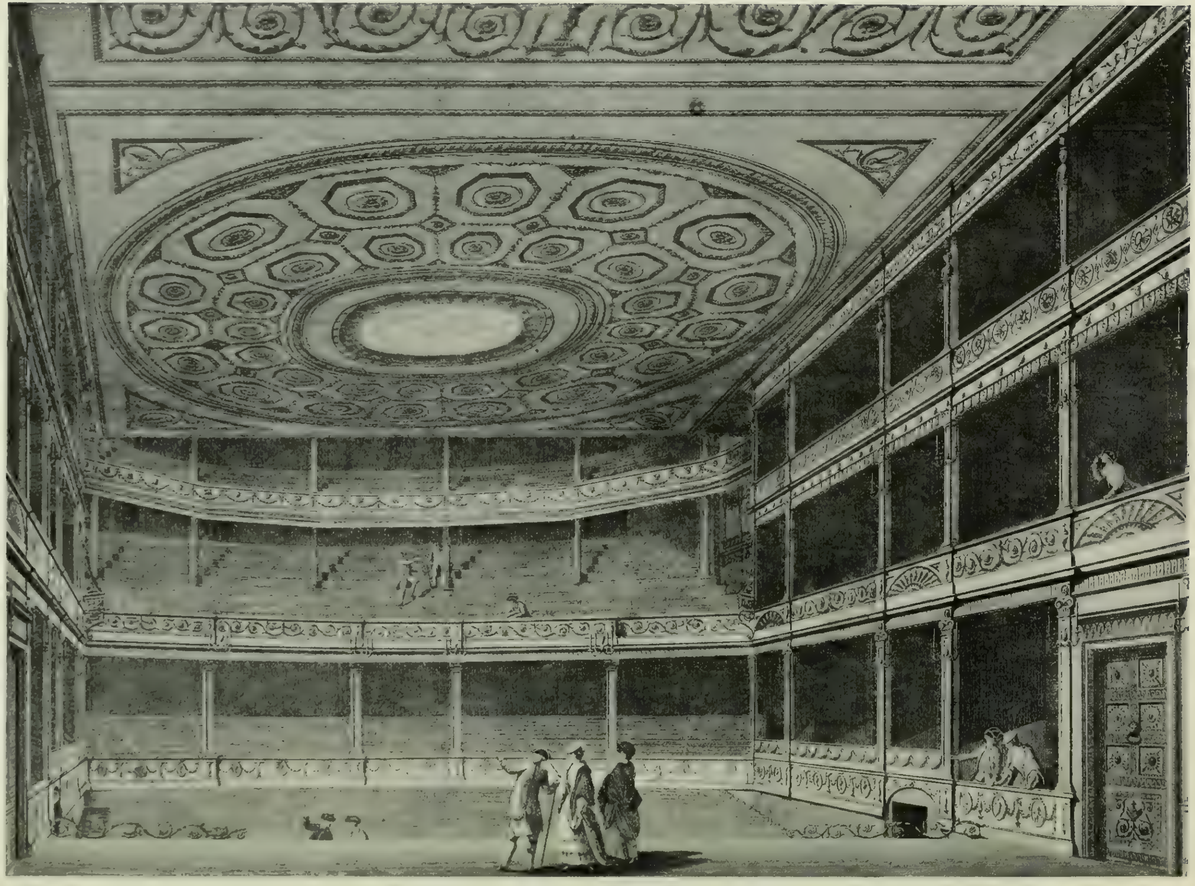

Fig. 242. DRURY LANE IN 1775
The three ' galleries ' should be contrasted with the five of the later house.
From a print in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Unfortunately, for the earlier period, the minor theatres served to intensify an evil which was rapidly gathering way in the patent houses. It was soon found that both sight and hearing were bad at Drury Lane and Covent Garden. Countless are the complaints, the satirical references, and the jests made concerning this. The actors and actresses coarsened their methods, but in vain; they could no longer make the appeal which they had made before. Scenery, spectacle was all that could help them to hold the attention of the audience, and as scenery had so dominated the thoughts of the Capons and the Loutherbourgs all went merrily forward. A subsidiary incentive came, too, from the minor theatres. These had been condemned to musical and spectacular pieces, and as a result set a fashion which soon came to dominate the entirety of the theatrical world.

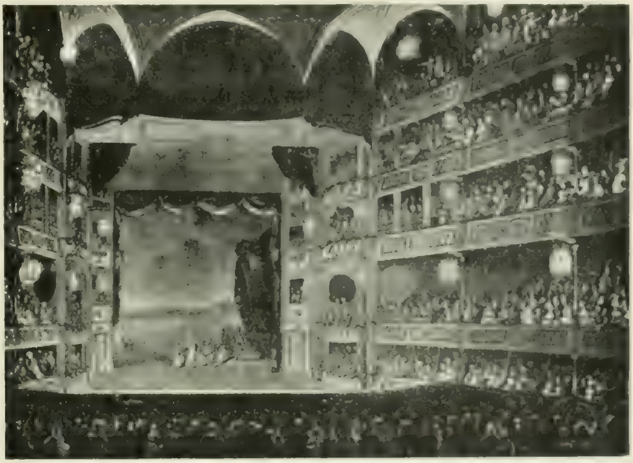

Fig. 243. Drury Lane in 1808

From Odell, *op. cit.*

This attention paid to spectacle led, naturally, toward the disappearance of the repertory system. It has often been pointed out that a 'run' of three days was normal for a new play in the Restoration period, and that the first really long 'run' was that of *The Beggar's Opera* in 1728—extending to just over a month. While many plays and operas had similar successes before 1800, the modern run is first approximated most closely in several spectacles which were presented at Sadler's Wells, at the Royal Circus, or at the Royal Grove about the years 1788 to 1795. Not only did some of these continue from an original production in April till the following October, but they had a corresponding run during the same months of the year following. It is here that we meet with the first definite establishment of that pernicious custom which has had such a deleterious effect on the fortunes of modern English drama.

In structure, the most important change in the theatres was the cutting away of the apron and the proscenium doors. For a long time the players, accustomed to their easy exits and entrances, opposed any alteration, and relics of the ancient doors—a link with Shakespeare and Palladio—existed in the provinces up to comparatively recent years. These doors disappeared in the London houses about the middle of the century. The Haymarket, we know, got rid of them in the winter of 1843, for an advertisement informs us that

> During the recess, the theatre has undergone Extensive Alterations, the Proscenium has been entirely remodelled, and the whole of the Interior decorated in the most Costly and Elegant Style. By a curtailment of the useless portion of the Stage in front of the Curtain, and advancing Orchestra and Lights near the Actors and Scenic Effects, the Lessee has been enabled to appropriate the portion so obtained, to form a certain number of Orchestra Stalls, which can be retained for the parties taking them the whole of the Evening.

With this notice we are on the threshold of the modern theatre, with its proscenium arch cutting the play off from the audience, with its reserved stalls, and its loss of the proscenium doors.

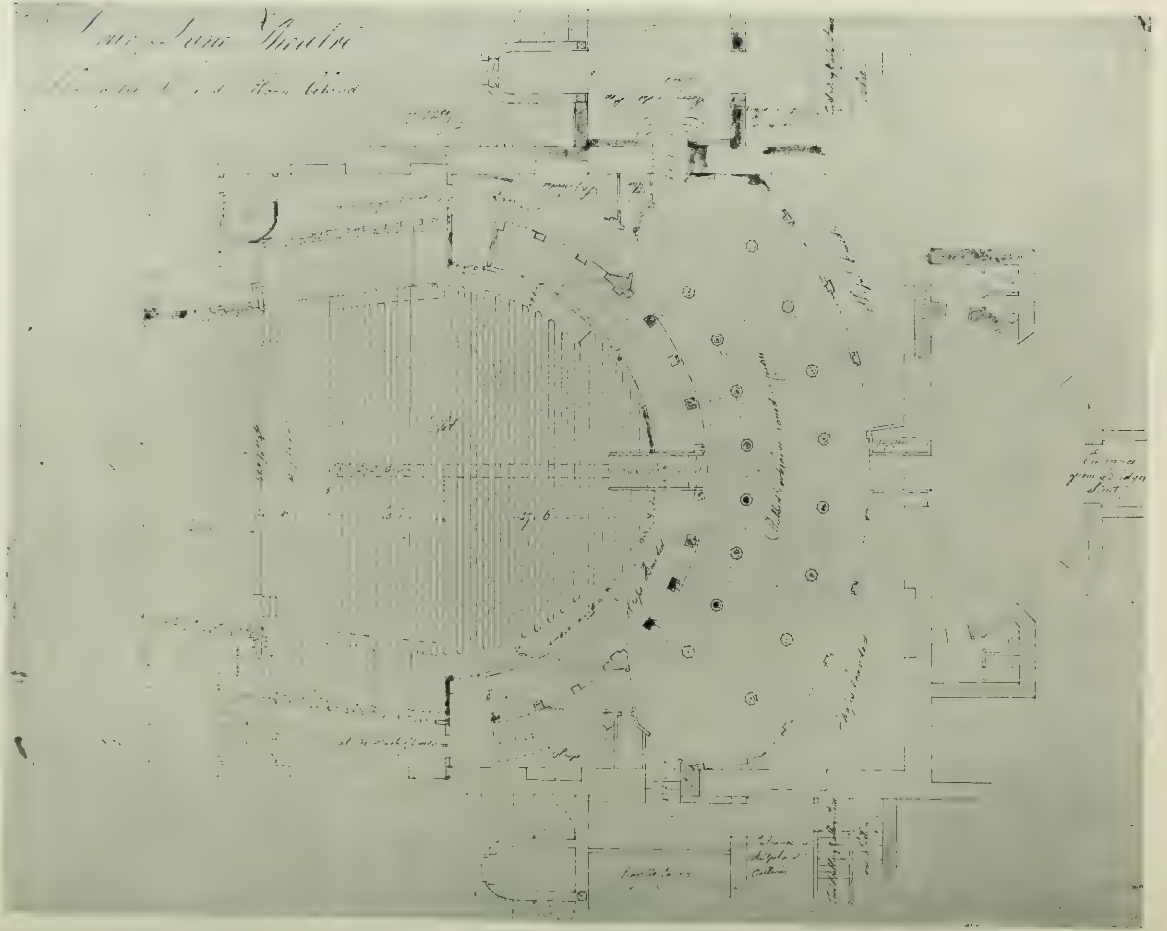
Drury Lane Theatre

Fig. 244. PLAN OF DRURY LANE, 1809

From the original in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

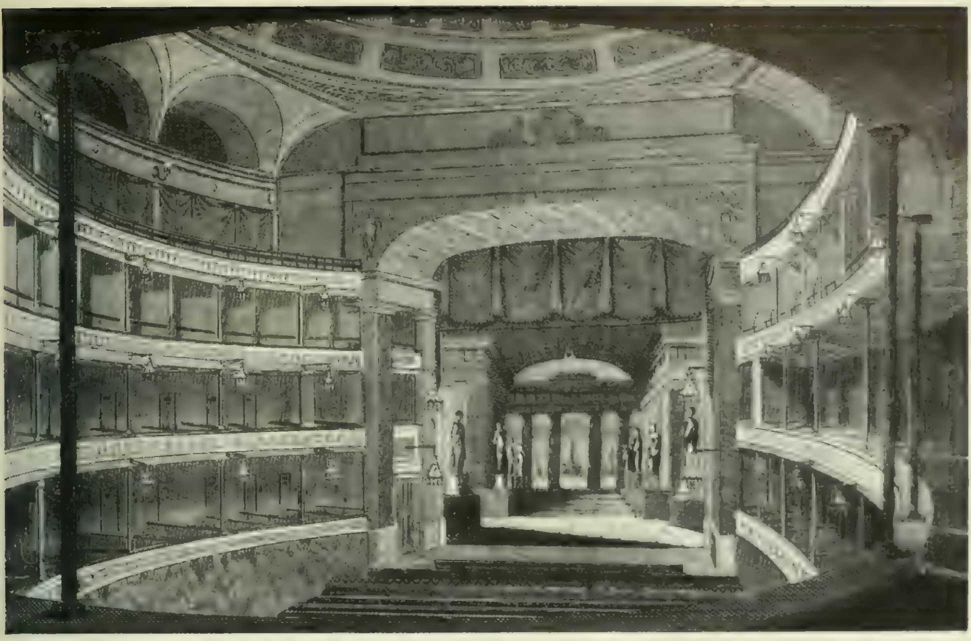

Fig. 245. COVENT GARDEN IN 1810

From *The Covent-Garden Journal.*

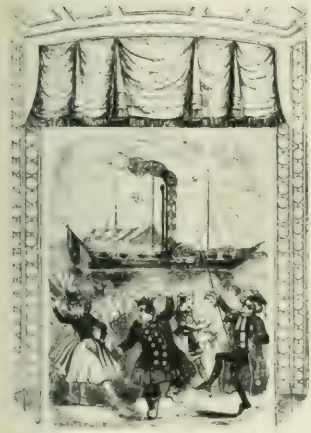

Fig. 246. A STEAMBOAT SCENE IN A TRAVESTIE OF "THE TEMPEST"

Frontispiece to *The Enchanted Isle*, as acted at the Adelphi, 1848.

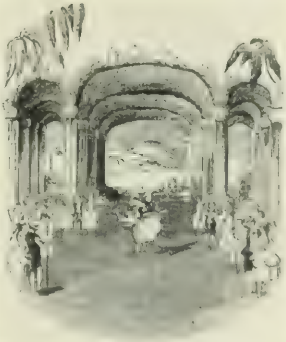

Fig. 247. AN EXTRAVAGANZA SETTING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Frontispiece to *The Golden Branch*, as acted at the Lyceum, 1848.

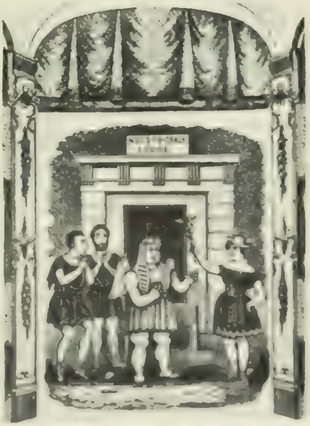

Fig. 248. A GREEK SCENE IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY BURLESQUE

Frontispiece to *[illegible]*, as acted at the Haymarket, [illegible]

Perhaps the disuse of the apron was partly responsible for the increased employment of the curtain. Slowly but surely managers, authors, and actors came to realize what a benefit this could be. 'Discoveries' could be readily made by its means; it could descend to conceal satisfactorily some thrilling tableau; it provided an opportunity of indicating those intervals so necessary for the setting of the ever more and more elaborate scenic effects. In any case, by 1850 the end of an act meant "Curtain," and the beginning of the next act meant the rising of the curtain, generally to reveal a new set.

One other general movement in the period is to be noted, and that is the dominance of the star. In earlier times a Burbage and a Betterton might be of greater magnitude than others acting with them, but their names were not billed large, and the audience did not come for them alone. From David Garrick's time, however, a new movement was set on foot, and the principal actor completely eclipsed his unhappy companions. In the nineteenth century a Kemble, a Macready, a Samuel Phelps, a Charles Kean, a Sir Henry Irving, and a Beerbohm Tree organized performances in which each was the central figure, each the centre of the scenic effect, each the point on which all eyes must be fixed. O'Keeffe's *Recollections* show us that it was not the nineteenth century which invented those many tricks and devices intended to attract the attention of the public to one spot or one person, but the nineteenth century certainly did establish as a principle the actor-manager system with all its accompanying disadvantages and misfortunes.

(ii) THE SCENIC ART OF THE PERIOD

The main tendencies of nineteenth-century scenic art may be summed up in the words spectacular and antiquarian. The Grieves at Astley's playhouse devised wonderful and perhaps often beautiful effects, and other theatres eagerly copied their efforts. Equestrian shows and aquatic shows throng the earlier years of the period; Vestris naturally required rich scenery for her terpsichorean burlettas which J. R. Planché so liberally provided. A "Programme of Scenery, &c." for his *The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood* (Covent Garden, 1840), described as "An Original, Grand, Comic, Romantic, Operatic, Melo-dramatic Fairy Extravaganza," may give some idea of what was attempted:

PART FIRST.—Period 1583.
BOUDOIR OF THE FAIRY BANEFUL. . . .
Banquet Hall in the Castle of the King of Noland.

PART SECOND.—Period 1601.
VESTIBULE IN THE ROYAL CASTLE.
APARTMENT OF THE PRINCESS IN THE OCTAGON TOWER. . . .
Lobby and Lumber Room at the very Top of the Castle.
STATE BED CHAMBER.

PART THIRD.—Period 1701.
MAGIC FOREST.
CASTLE GATES. MOAT AND DRAWBRIDGE. OLD PALACE YARD,
And Re-view of a Company of the "Old Guards."
Quick-set Hedge, and a merry Green Wood in the Spring-time of the year.
THE STATE BED CHAMBER (Exactly as before.) . .
Illuminated Palace and Gardens of the Fairy Antidota.
FETE AL-FRESCO. . . .
DEPARTURE OF THE SEVEN FAIRIES, in a Patent Safety "Fly,"
constructed by Mr. W. Bradwell, "time out of mind the Fairies' Coachmaker."

All this, it is true, is in a "Fairy Extravaganza," but it was the Fairy Extravaganza which set the tone for so much of the scenic art of this age.

The result of all this was that Shakespeare took on a new lease of life. The actor-manager wished to make a success in the plays of Britain's Greatest Bard, and as a consequence revived tragedy and comedy alike, always reserving for himself the sympathetic rôles. At the same time the actor-manager found that Shakespeare lent himself as much to spectacle as did a Planché. What an opportunity for gaunt castles and medieval chambers in *Macbeth* and *Lear*; what a host of fairy 'business' could be brought into *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; and what a charming play *The Tempest* was for the attentions of the scenic artist! Still, a new public, tutored by romantic sentiment, had arisen, and these wished their spectacles to be correct in all details. The actor-manager, therefore, following Capon, turned scholar, and posed as an instructor as well as an artist.

The first sign of development in this direction appeared in the Kemble production of *King John* in 1823, when J. R. Planché, an enthusiastic antiquary as well as an indefatigable playwright, persuaded the manager to allow him to habit the piece. With the assistance of a number of learned enthusiasts, and fortified by a close study of illuminated manuscripts, Planché put on what was undoubtedly the first completely 'historical' production of Shakespeare's drama, for he paid attention not only to the hero's costume but to those of the meanest underlings. The result was that "receipts for 400 to 600 pounds nightly soon reimbursed the management for the expense of the production," and, this being so, quite naturally "a complete reformation of dramatic costume became from that moment inevitable upon the English stage." From now on the revivals of Shakespeare's plays are billed as dressed in correct, authentic garments, and in the advertisements the various 'authorities' are duly printed. The crisis, if not the catastrophe, is reached in the versions prepared for the stage by Charles Kean. Plentiful record remains in the newspapers of the time regarding these revivals, but we need do no more, in our endeavour to estimate the tendencies of the time, than turn to the printed texts of the plays. How erudite are the notes to difficult passages in the dialogue, and how anxious the actor-manager is to convince his public that he has consulted all the possible sources of information, and that his settings and costumes do not conflict with historical fact! The preface to *The Merchant of Venice* (Princess's, 1850) informs us that

> the costumes and customs are represented as existing about the year 1600, when Shakespeare wrote the play. The dresses are chiefly selected from a work by Cesare Vecellio, entitled "*Degli Habiti Antichi e Moderni di diverse Parti del Mondo.* In Venetia, 1590": as well as from other sources to be found in the British Museum.

The procession which opens the comedy "is copied from a print in the British Museum, by Josse Amman, who died in 1591," while the text is generously padded out with a series of lengthy "Historical Notes."

For *The Merchant of Venice*, for the tragedies and for the histories, of course, all was plain sailing. The manager had merely to look up the historical sources for the reigns of King John or of Henry VIII and reproduce "the costumes and customs" on the stage; but a difficulty obviously arose when *The Winter's Tale* was revived. Kean's preface to this play as performed at the Princess's in 1856 is so illuminating that parts of it may be quoted in full. While recognizing the "charming" nature of the drama, the actor manager grumbled loudly at the fact that Shakespeare had

> left the incidents of the play . . . alternating between Sicily and Bohemia, without assigning any specific date to the time of action. Chronological contradictions abound throughout the five acts; inasmuch as reference is made to the Delphic oracle, Christian burial, an Emperor of Russia, and an Italian painter of the sixteenth century.

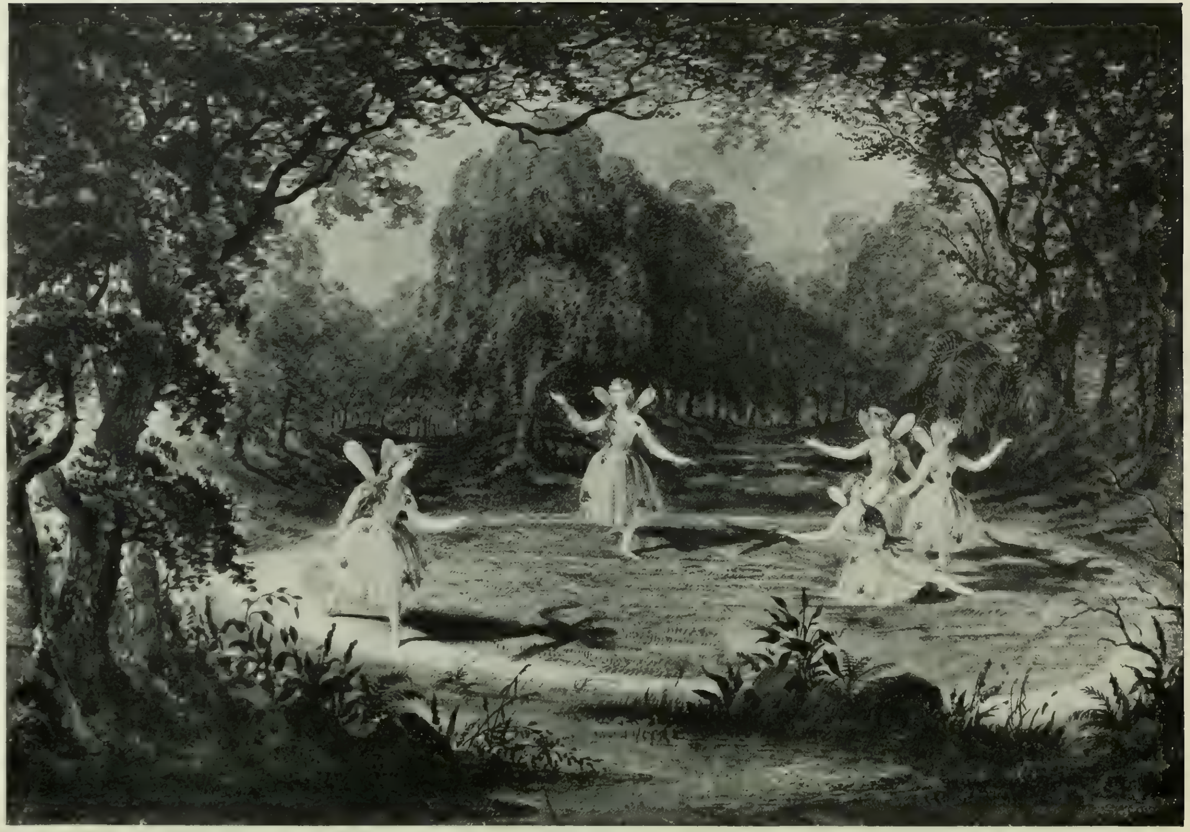

Fig. 249. A DANCE OF FAIRIES IN KEAN'S PRODUCTION OF "A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM." DESIGN BY GRIEVE

From the original in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Surely this was a hard nut for an antiquarianly minded manager to crack. Typical is the manner in which Kean solved his difficulty. He may be allowed to tell his own tale:

> It is evident that when an attempt is made to combine truth with history, conflicting epochs cannot all be illustrated; and I have therefore thought it permissible to select a period which, while it accords with the spirit of the play, may be considered the most interesting, as well as the most instructive.
>
> The pivot on which the story revolves, is in fact the decision pronounced by the oracle of Delphi, and taking this incident as the corner stone of the whole fabric, I have adopted a period when Syracuse, according to Thucydides, had, from a mere Doric colony, increased in magnificence to a position in no way inferior to that of Athens herself, when at the summit of her political prosperity. An opportunity is thus afforded of reproducing a classical era, and placing before the eyes of the spectator, *tableaux vivants* of the private and public life of the ancient Greeks, at a time when the arts flourished to a perfection, the scattered vestiges of which still delight and instruct the world. Assuming that the civilization of Athens was reflected by Syracuse, I feel that no period could have been selected more interesting and suggestive, or more likely to give additional zest to those who wish to contemplate the manners and habits of a country once "the centre of ancient civilization, and the fruitful mother of so many illustrious sons," but which can now, alas! boast of nothing beyond its history and its ruins.
>
> To connect the country known as "Bohemia" with an age so remote, would be impossible: I have therefore followed the suggestion of Sir Thomas Hanmer, in his annotations on Shakespeare, by the substitution of *Bithynia*. The difference of name in no way affects the incidents or metre of the play, while it enables me to represent the costume of the inhabitants of Asia Minor at a corresponding period, associated so intimately with Greece, and acquiring additional interest from close proximity to the Homeric kingdom of Troy.
>
> The Phrygian dress presents a marked distinction between the two races that constitute the chief actors in the drama, while at the same time scope is afforded for the introduction of customs common to both. A leading instance is furnished in the pastoral scene of the fourth act, where the festivities applicable to the season of sheep-shearing take place, and in which Shakespeare brings in, for the purpose of a dance, twelve rustics, "who have made themselves all men of hair, and call themselves Satyrs." I have here ventured to introduce one of these festivals in honour of Bacchus, known under the title of "Dionysia," wherein similar disguises were used, while the actors indulged in mad enthusiasm and extravagant merriment.
>
> For the purpose of presenting with closer accuracy the domestic manners of the period, Leontes and his Queen Hermione, together with their Kingly guest, are first discovered towards the termination of a *Feast*. . . . As dancing and music invariably formed a portion of such entertainments, a representation of the celebrated *Pyrrhic Dance*, so popular throughout the principal states of Greece for its martial character, has been attempted.
>
> Later in the play, "Time, as Chorus," has been restored, in accordance with the poet's conception. By this restoration, the lapse of sixteen years, supposed to have taken place from the birth of Perdita until she is seen as the shepherdess in the fourth act, is rendered more intelligible. To carry out the idea, a classical figure, more in accordance with the character of the play as now represented, has been preferred to the ordinary old man with his scythe and hour glass, who was unknown in classic ages. Cronos, the ancient representative of Time, has been chosen, and I have ventured to associate him with an allegorical tableau of Luna and the Stars (personified), sinking before the Car of Phoebus, which rises with all its attributes of splendour. Each figure is taken from an antique, or from the works of Flaxman.

Kean has obviously "ventured" much, but he has done so in good company. "Eminent Professors" are referred to; the architecture has been superintended by George Godwin, F.R.S.; thanks are given to "George Scharf, Esq., F.S.A. (author of the Hand book to the Greek and Pompeian Courts at the Crystal Palace)"; the "vegetation peculiar to Bithynia is adopted from his private drawings, taken on the spot"; "James A. Davies, Lecturer on Ancient Music," has given his valuable aid; while a host of artists, including Grieve, Telbin, W. Gordon, F. Lloyds, Cuthbert, Dayes, and Morris, were responsible for the scenery. Truly an awe-inspiring production, beautiful perhaps in some ways, but not Shakespeare, not even genuine theatric art, something which, to use Kean's own words, is "an exhibition of pageantry appealing to the eye" and "an illustration addressed to the understanding." Pageantry is not scenic art, and historical instruction—what on earth is it doing in this galley?

It is hardly necessary to state that these historical efforts of Kean, which he had inherited from Macready, who in his turn had them from Capon and Kemble, were passed on to Tree and to

Irving. The gorgeous state and panoply of a production at His Majesty's was no new thing; it sprang from that craze for 'processions' which we find established at a very early period added to the falsely directed antiquarianism of player and artist. Nor is the tendency dead. Shakespeare's plays are still revived in the good old style, and are still fairly popular among an audience who have not learnt the real secrets of the stage.

This antiquarian-spectacular movement is unquestionably the most important in the period. As we have already seen, it is allied to realism, and we must note, of course, the gradually improving methods of scenic display. Flats often disappear now, and solidly built structures take their place. Real antiques are placed on the stage, and much of the artificial and the spurious vanishes. At the same time the nineteenth century, in England at least, had not much to teach us. Already on the Continent an Appia was making an appeal for newer methods, but the echoes of his words were lost in the Channel. Even in this present year of grace 1927 we have hardly realized the many possibilities which German, French, and Russian stage-craft has to offer us.[1]

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[1] In dismissing as of relatively little importance the scenic art of the earlier nineteenth century we must, of course, recognize that in some respects those were years of pioneering. Apart from the frequent use of the *Eidophuskion* and of similar panoramic effects, we find before 1850 quite a number of interesting experiments. In one play the setting is a representation of a side-view, from the wings, of a fictional stage; in another two rooms in a house are set one above the other on separate planes, action going on in both. George Kelly's *The Torch-bearers* (1923) has been singled out by critics because of the 'novelty' of its setting, which represents the back of a fictional stage. In reality this novelty was anticipated in the early nineteenth century. In the same way the productions of *Angelo* and of Eugene O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms* repeat the second device to which I have made allusion above. While noting these interesting experiments, however, one must admit that they were little beyond experiments and did nothing to change the general solidity of the stage of their time.

CHAPTER XII

THE THEATRES OF THE MODERN PERIOD

(i) THE REALISTIC SCHOOL

REALISM was born with romanticism, yet in its severer aspects it may be regarded as a reaction to that flamboyant romantic sentiment which expressed itself in Swinburne and in Wilde. In other words, romanticism proper delighted in the realism of history, in the realism of wild nature in opposition to the conventional treatment of life and of past ages. Later realism does not look at the picturesque but at the ugly, the drab, and the solid. It prefers a labourer's cottage, a slum-tenement, a house of prostitution, to a view of soaring mountains or a wide expanse of seascape. It feels, consciously or unconsciously, that the romantic realist, in looking at flowers and clouds and trees, has missed the misery of human life, has deliberately substituted the beautiful for the true.

This reaction toward immediate realism is marked in dramatic art by the plays of Robertson, Ibsen, Strindberg, Brieux, and it finds at the present time a certain counterpart in the work of scenic artists. The fundamental philosophic tenet of this school is that art should be an excerpt from life, that a play should be, as it were, three hours seized bodily out of the rushing hours of civilized existence. Furthermore, that the art of the theatre is an art of pure illusion. When we go to the theatre we forget ourselves, or should forget ourselves, believing that what we see on the stage is real life, the real life of others. I need not here enter into a discussion concerning the fallacy of this view; that has been done elsewhere at greater length than I could afford here. We may, on the other hand, note some of the consequences of this tendency in the world of scenic artistry. Clearly, if illusion be our aim, we must endeavour to make our setting as life-like as possible. Shaky flats, therefore, must go completely. Our walls must be so solid that a man may fall against them without causing them to shake; or, if the scene represented be a modern-built four-roomed house, they must be of just that requisite jerry-built shakiness which will make the illusion complete—for we must be careful not to let our endeavours carry us beyond this truth to reality. Everything on the stage must be exact and genuine; genuine bread, genuine butter (or margarine, according to the social position of the *dramatis personae*), genuine milk, genuine beer. So far as we can, we must reproduce in every intimate detail the surroundings of the characters as these would appear in ordinary existence.

It is here that the great and fundamental problem arises—that problem which has been so often described as the problem of the Fourth Wall. It is evident that a twentieth-century theatre, without an apron-stage, presents a scene to the spectators in a kind of picture-frame. Behind or within this frame the scene is set, with the consequence that a spectator looks into a room which, as it were, lacks a fourth wall. Three sides are there before him, but the footlights mark the invisible fourth. It is precisely at this point that realism of the exacter sort collapses. No one in real life ever saw a room which had only three walls; no one in real life would act and talk so intimately did he know that a thousand spectators were watching him; no one in real life, that is to say, approaches in any way the supposed reproduction on the stage. Various artists have endeavoured to evade this difficulty. One will carefully lay a fender and fire-irons facing the footlights and the audience, while the actors make pretence to warm themselves at the possibly rather chilly atmosphere of the auditorium. This device, which once seemed so clever and up-to-date, does little more than call attention to the unreality of the stage picture. Whether the actors pretend to warm themselves or not, the audience know perfectly well that they are not a fire-place, that it is all an affair of pretence, and of false pretence at that.

The only logical solution, of course, is that proposed cynically by the Russian dramatist Evreinov. In effect his thesis is as follows. If you wish realism, if you do hold this philosophy, for heaven's sake be reasonable. Never let a play be acted in English or in Russian the characters of which are supposed to be Swedes or Germans. Never employ a careful reproduction of a fourteenth-century oak table, always purchase an original specimen. Don't bother about the audience; be logical and build up that fourth wall. Then, and only then, will your play, your acting, come close to real life.

Pirandello perhaps carries us a trifle farther still. Even with all this your play will not be realistic, in the firmest sense of the word. Your actors, after all, are only actors pretending to be something they are not. Still more, even if we were to dismiss our actors, and employ a labourer, a clerk, a typist for their 'real' parts, they could not produce in absolute sincerity the words, the intonations, the passions which they might have uttered or experienced at some crisis in their careers. The only 'realistic play,' we may declare, is to be found in the ordinary conversation and customary actions of daily life; our logical application of the realistic theory has resulted in a familiar *reductio ad absurdum.*

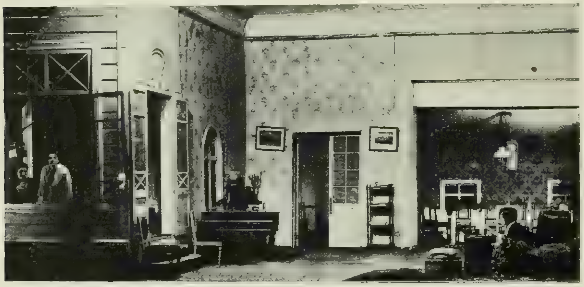

Fig. 250. A Setting for Chechov's "The Three Sisters" at the Moscow Art Theatre
From Bashky, *The Path of the Russian Stage.*

There has lately been considerable discussion among critics concerning the problem of the actor's psychology. This in its own way is related to the realistic theory, for there are those who hold that an actor, if he is a true actor, must feel in all their intensity the passions of the character he is representing. According to this view, Mr X, playing Othello, *is* Othello for the two hours he is on the stage; he *is* Hamlet, or he *is* Macbeth. Superficially considered, this view would seem to admit as possible a certain introduction of stricter realism through the peculiar psychology of the actor; but, not only does the theory seem to be psychologically untenable, but it still fails to bring stage representation to the required level of naturalistic reproduction of life. If Mr X *is* Othello, why does he not kill a new Desdemona each night? Or, rather, why does he not kill his particular Desdemona at a special matinée, forthwith put an end to himself, and let a companion reproduce the same bloody process the following evening? Only thus could *Othello* approach toward realistic production; but an actor, like any ordinary person, desires to live, and, no matter how far he deludes himself into believing that the monster jealousy inflames his own heart and sets his reason wandering, he carefully refrains from being arrested for murdering his fair partner or from putting an end to his own life, grandiloquently, on the stage—for prudence is always the master of theories.

Realism, then, in this restricted sense, is philosophically and practically impossible. Those who spend their time working toward it are merely following a track which has no ending, no interest, no objective.

(ii) THE ALTERNATIVES

Obviously, if illusion is impossible in the theatre, then some other force must be sought for which more closely corresponds with the needs of the playhouse. The literature dealing with the ultimate object of theatrical art is vast, the controversies and the discussions are innumerable, but there is a certain consensus of modern opinion outside the purely realist school which tends to show that that which should be aimed at in the theatre is not naturalistic illusion, secured by means of intimate objects of real life, but imaginative illusion, induced by symbolic forms and colours. In other words, the art of the theatre is an art, based on convention like all arts. The 'illusion' of the theatre is never so complete that we forget that we are spectators and that these are performers before us, nor is that 'illusion' helped at all by the introduction of small objects such as we meet with in the rooms of our friends or acquaintances. Our imagination is aided on the contrary by the setting forth of shapes and forms of a non-naturalistic symbolic nature, by means of which we are led insensibly to some emotions and passions which it is the object of the drama to arouse.

It is clear that in the embracing of this theory, consciously or unconsciously, we are moving back as well as forward, for was the Greek theatre not thus symbolic? did the medieval stage not depend largely upon symbolic costumes and properties for its effect? This being so, it is not surprising that many modern theatre-artists should have gone back to the past, not as Kean did, in order to present before the spectators pleasing "illustrations" of ancient social customs, but in order to seize from Greek art the secrets of its inner power. There is then the group which we may call symbolically statuesque. Alongside of these there are others who seek an escape in the world of fantasy. No less than the others do they indulge in symbolism, but their symbols owe little debt to Greek form. They are the expressionists, the futurists of scenic design. There are also those who, despising outward naturalism, seek for truth in the misty regions of psycho-analysis, and weave strange visions out of man's subconscious being. Evreinov has a play, *The Theatre of the Soul*, which has for a 'setting' the inside of a man, with the heart beating and the lungs breathing, and for characters the 'egos' of the self. Still further there are those who search for the simple and the unadorned, passing back to 'Elizabethan' curtains and traverses, who preach glibly the 'bare stage,' and will have naught to do with scenery of any description. These form a group by themselves.

In all this age of manifold experimentation, in this period of Gordon Craigs, Reinhardts, Jessners, Copeaus, Meierholds, Stanislavskis, it is impossible to deal in detail with the work of any one man, but an attempt may be made to indicate the chief lines of development of some of the principal schools.

(iii) GORDON CRAIG AND OTHERS

It has for long been recognized that Mr Gordon Craig is one of the most suggestive geniuses among modern scenic artists. Craigism has developed into a cult, and his ideas appear and reappear in the most unexpected and out of the way places. His work may be studied best in his own beautifully illustrated and fascinatingly written volumes, for there the artist reveals his ideas visually and then explains their meaning to us. Fundamentally, Mr Craig's ideals for the theatre are mass of light and shade, symbolic form of a statuesque kind, and the utilization of different planes for dramatic action. His proposals regarding the use of folding screens for scenery need not occupy our attention here; these are merely a means to an end; rather must we concentrate upon the general effect he aims at. Take first his design for the *Electra* of Sophocles. Mr Craig's note to it is, "A vast and forbidding doorway. I often think, ſtill remains the beſt background for any tragedy"—a vaſt and forbidding doorway, to create the tragic mood, ſtatuesque in its proportions, reminding us somehow of the Greek theatre, with space and magic and wonder of line. Not only so, but in Mr Craig's design there are to be noted also the various planes, so that the actors may move on diverse ſtages, ascending and descending oft in the course of the drama. As a companion, take another setting of *Hamlet.* Here great hanging curtains give again the sense of space; ſteps lead from one level to another; through a break in the curtains can be seen the sky and a wandering moon. Once more ſtatuesque proportion, simplicity of form, infinite suggeſtion by means of carefully placed shadows and light.

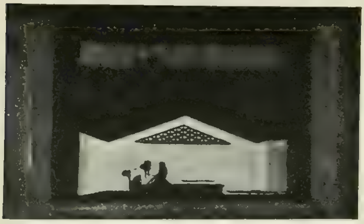
Fig. 251. Scene in "Nie-Boska Komedja" at the Teatr Polski, Warsaw

Everywhere have Mr Craig's ideas penetrated. The bold massing of light and shade is seen in a setting for the *Nie-Boska Komedja* as presented at the Teatr Polski in Warsaw (Fig. 251). The design by Ernſt Stern for Reinhardt's *The Miracle* (Fig. 253) obviously recalls that vaſt doorway which is "the beſt background for any tragedy." In Karl Czeschka's palace for *King Lear*, as produced at the Deutsches Theater in 1908 (Fig. 252) there is the same employment of severely simple masses of light and shade, with the ſteps designed to provide ample movement for the actors.

Carried a ſtage further, we find this ſtyle developed freely in Jessner's productions of the Schauspielhaus at Berlin. Mr MacGowan has provided us with some illuminating sketches for his productions. Here ſteps (*Jessnertreppen*, they are called) play a great part, and pure masses of colour and form are caſt on the ſtage. In the design for *Richard III* Richmond ſtands in white where Richard had ſtood in red before; the colours and the height of the characters symbolizing their position as well as their purpose in the play. Perhaps this design may seem far enough removed from Mr Craig's more subtle designs, but the impress is there; this is part of the movement we may call Craigism.

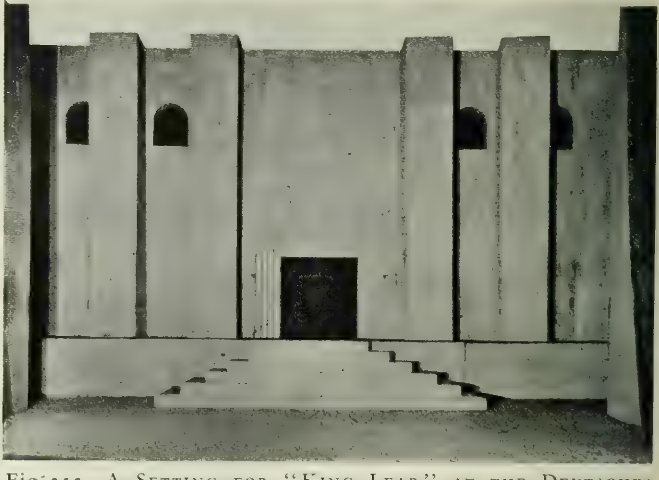
Fig. 252. A Setting for "King Lear" at the Deutsches Theater, 1908. Design by Karl Czeschka

From Sayler, *Max Reinhardt and his Theatre.*

(iv) Futurist and other Movements

The word 'futuriſt,' of course, has no very definite significance, but we may employ the term here to indicate a certain school of artiſts who, breaking away from the prevalent realism of former decades, endeavour to secure new impressions, not by the use of statuesque form and light and shade, but by that of bizarre shapes and fantastic conceptions. The Fourth Studio of the Moscow Art Theatre, remembering yet the strange fancies of their late director, Vachtangov, presents one form of this style of setting at its best. The strangely distorted pillars, the varying planes, the whole fantastic conception is in perfect harmony with the mood of the players. The revolt, however, is a revolt which takes many directions, and if fantastic use of ' cubist ' forms is one of its manifestations it has many others which call for our attention. The two Russian settings in Figs. 254 and 255 are only part of what is on the Continent becoming a universal expression. A variant is provided in

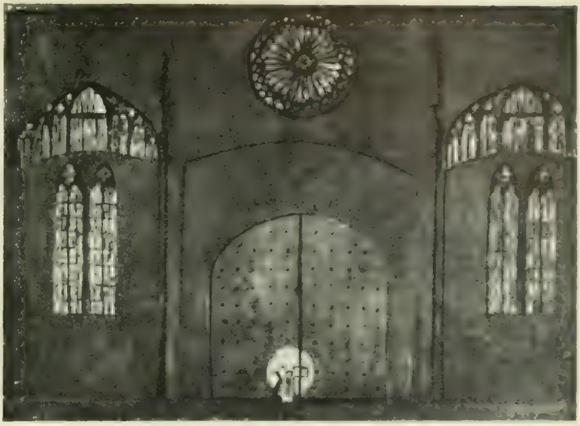

Fig. 253. A Setting for "The Miracle" (1911), by Ernst Stern.

From Sayler, op. cit.

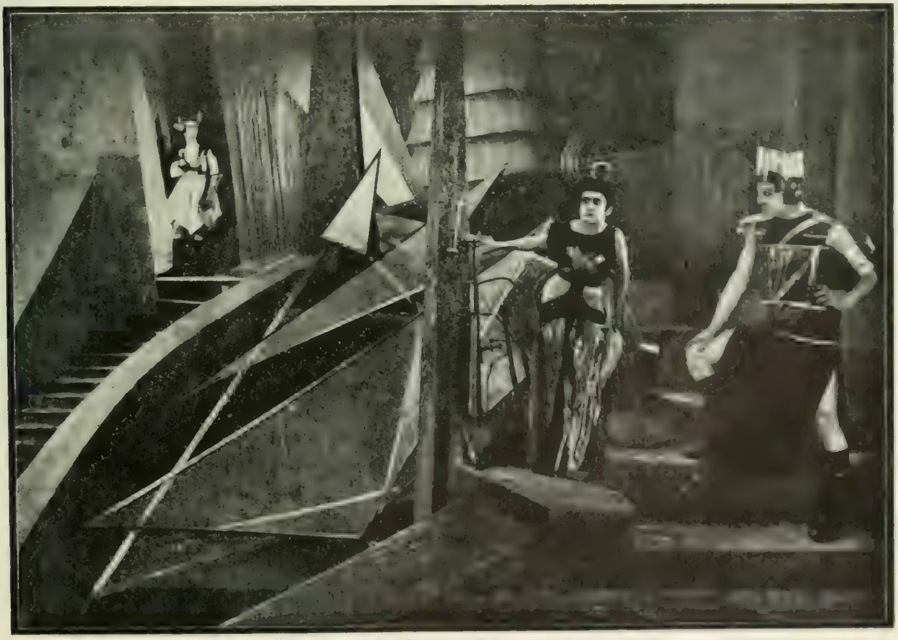

Fig. 254. A Modern Russian Setting.

Ernst Stern's design for *Die Wüpper* as produced by Das junge Deutschland in 1919. Here the fantasy is less irresponsible, and deliberate grotesqueness and thwarting of the laws of perspective are intended to draw into prominence certain special and significant elements in the scene. In other hands the movement of revolt leads toward 'constructivism,' expressed most fully in Tairov's Moscow Kamerny Theatre. A typical example of the tendency in this playhouse is Alexander Vesnin's setting for Chesterton's *The Man who was Thursday*,[1] where a series of scaffoldings, supporting a number of platforms and raised passageways, provides that amplitude of levels which the modernists desire. The constructional settings make use of machinery, and often deliberately stress the machine tendency of this age. A very simple, although beautiful, sketch for Kaiser's *Gas* made by Paul Shelving was reproduced in *British Drama*, and shows the use of mechanical objects, not built within the scene but rather used as a background for the performers. With a bare suggestion of Grecian columns, the same style is used in Rabinovitch's model for the Moscow Art Theatre production of the *Lysistrata* of Aristophanes,[2] while the structural forms are, as it were, geometricized and simplified in Enrico Prampolini's model for the Teatro Magnetique. Meierhold and his followers prefer to these the use of a few scaffoldings set in a bare stage, the general aim being an impressionistic delineation of modern life.[3]

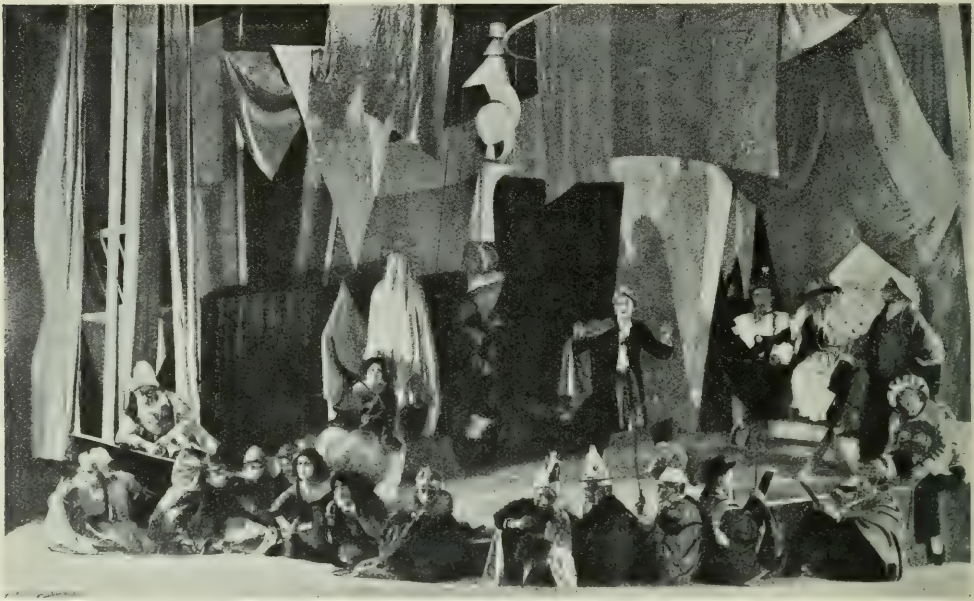

Fig. 255. "PRINCESS TURANDOT" AS GIVEN BY THE MOSCOW ART THEATRE

This style has hardly been seen in our own English theatres, for we are still in the grip of

[1] Reproduced in *The Theatre Arts Monthly*, ix, 3.

[2] This model, as well as that of Prampolini, was exhibited at the Paris Exposition of 1925, and is reproduced in the official catalogue of the Section U.R.S.S.

[3] An example of a setting in Meierhold's theatre is given in *British Drama*. Another is provided in the Catalogue of the Paris Exposition above referred to. In Meierhold's theatre the background is the brick wall of the theatre itself.

representationalism, and are ſtill too timid to indulge in experimentation. While this fact is to be regretted—for it places us far in the rear where the art of the theatre is concerned—it muſt be realized that, invigorating and suggestive as the new ſtyles are, the tendency toward revolt may be carried over-far. While a fantaſtic scene may form the moſt delightful and appropriate setting for a *Princess Turandot*; while the sharp angles and broad masses of light and shade may perfectly express the machine world of Toller's *Masse Mensch*; while a new social ideal may be beſt interpreted through the ſtrange forms of Meierhold's Moscow theatre; the carrying over of this particular ſtyle to plays emotionally unsuited for it muſt unqueſtionably lead toward a conflict of aims and of emotions. An example of this was, perhaps, shown in Komisarjevski's recent production of Gogol's *The Inspector-General*, where the ever-creaking turntable, with its wall-less doors and pitiful window-frames, was ill suited to the satiric and witty ſtyle of the nineteenth-century comedy. We are undoubtedly in an age when the theatre is advancing, but we have not yet reached that period when the maſter-mind is determined to subordinate his own particular theories to the objective or spirit of a particular drama. At present the theory tends to rule, even as the theory of hiſtorical realism ruled a century ago.

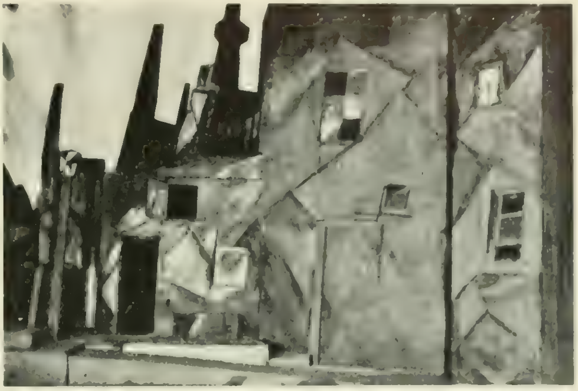

Fig. 256. A Setting for "Die Weber" (1910), by Ernst Stern

From Sayler, *op. cit.*

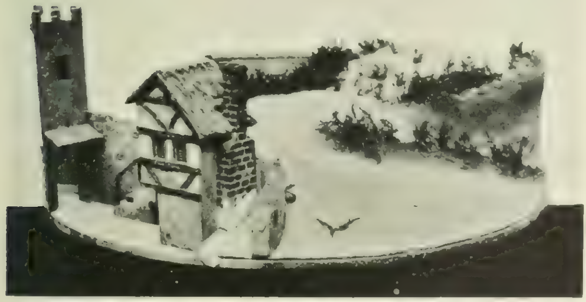

Fig. 257. A Model of the Revolving Stage at the Deutsches Theater

From Sayler, *op. cit.*

(v) The Complex and Simple Theatre

All of the schools mentioned above delight, each in its own way, in subtly altering settings. Mr Gordon Craig's designs are more ſtatic than the others, but even he has the idea of forms on the ſtage altering to suit the emotional content of the various portions of the play. His followers, or those sprung indirectly from his inspiration, as well as others who delighted in spectacular effects, have tried all in their power to evolve new and newer devices for the alteration of their settings. More and more ornate playhouses have been erected, particularly in Germany, with mechanical contrivances and innovations calculated to cheer the heart of the moſt exacting and ambitious director. It is this tendency which led to the introduction by

Lautenschläger of Munich in 1896 of the revolving stage. This type of stage has many disadvantages, although it obviously gives an opportunity for the displaying of many different sets; it has been used largely by Reinhardt when he was in command of the Deutsches Theater (Fig. 257). A variant of the revolving stage is the sliding stage as in the Deutsches Opernhaus in Berlin and the Schauspielhaus in Dresden, where portions of the stage can, by mechanical means, be made to rise and fall, to move to right and to left, at the will of the director. It is all very ingenious, but it is fundamentally useless; for the best effects the simplest means have ever been found the most powerful. The vast revolving and sliding stages of the Continent are placing the director in the hands of a machine.

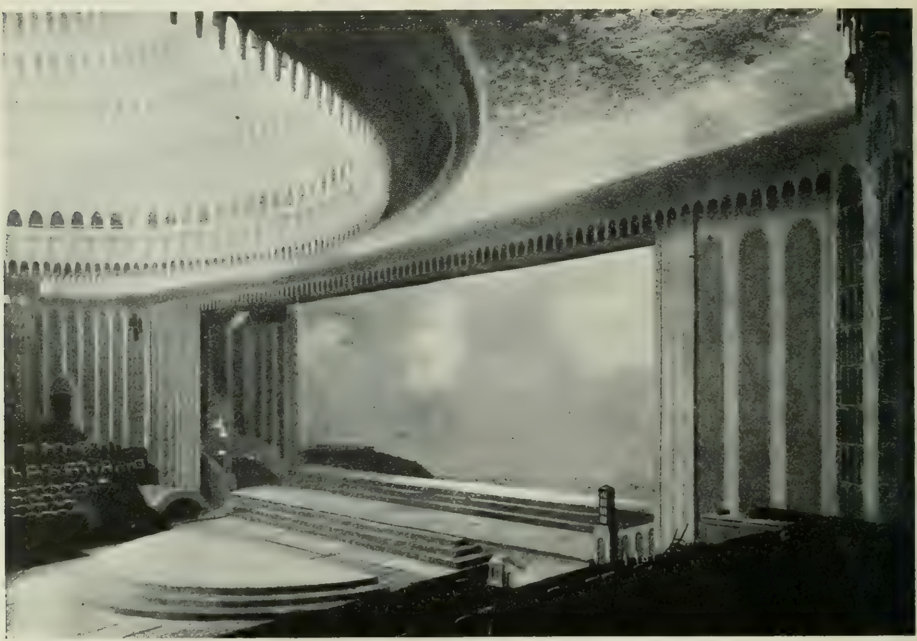

Fig. 258. The Grosses Schauspielhaus, Berlin

From Sayler, *op. cit.*

With this growth of the large mechanical theatre goes, of course, the perfection of certain playhouse accessories. It was only in recent years that the swinging sky-cloths gave way to the plaster dome and cyclorama; it was only in recent years that electric lighting received again that attention which was paid to candle illumination by Sabbatini and Loutherbourg. The marvellous play of light in a Reinhardt production, the startlingly realistic effects secured by the latest Schwabe-Hasait system—these are things old and new—old because merely a development of earlier experimentation and thought, new because revealing to us schemes of colour, masses of illumination undreamt of in the past.

With this too we must take the experimentation in what may be called the large theatre. Typical in its own way is the Grosses Schauspielhaus at Berlin, with its carefully planned stage and its towering dome of innumerable lights (Fig. 258). The strange pillars of illumination, the glistening stalactite-like ornamentation provide a feast for the eye in a bewilderingly fantastic style.

At the same time a reaction against those complex or vaster theatres has already set in, and beside the Grosses Schauspielhaus and the Opera we find a tendency toward the utilization of studio theatres, and toward the employment of formal settings in place of the spectacularly representational or spectacularly symbolic settings of the previous decades.

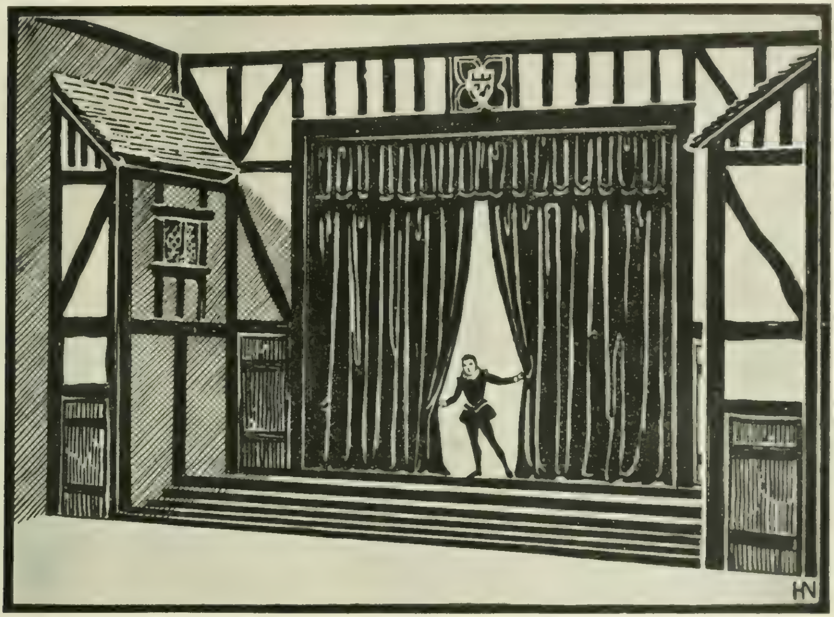

Fig. 259. East London College Theatre. Design by Herbert Norris

(vi) The Formal Setting

After the Grosses Schauspielhaus Reinhardt has turned to the Redoutensaal at Vienna, converting a beautiful ballroom used once by Maria Theresa into a theatre of perfectly formal design. Here a delicately designed 'proscenium,' with a central aperture and four doors, reminiscent of the Palladian theatre, backs a stage lit by the glittering candelabra overhead. Change of scene is achieved by the placing of a few properties on the stage, chairs, tables, trees in tubs, screens serving to indicate for the audience the surroundings of the actors.

A similar experiment has been made in Paris, at the Théâtre du vieux Colombier under the direction of Jacques Copeau. Here steps lead down from a small stage to the ground level. A wide aperture is at the back, doors lead away to right and to left, the whole being framed within a series of three curved arches. Again a few properties, the use of a screen or a curtain, serve to indicate the locality and the atmosphere. All the heavily symbolic and spectacularly representational have vanished.

These formal theatres represent perhaps the last word that has been said so far by the modern artists of the theatre ; yet that last word is one of very respectable antiquity. Truly there is nothing new under the sun, and all that seems most modern is but an adaptation of the past. The revolving stage was taken from Japan. Gordon Craig's and Jessner's steps were foreshadowed in many an eighteenth-century baroque design (*cf.* Figs. 164, 171, and 180). The mass of simple form is an inheritance from the Greeks. The massive productions of *Sumurun* and of *The Miracle* owe much to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century festival processionalism and to medieval example. The Redoutensaal and the Théâtre du vieux Colombier are clearly derived from the Teatro Olimpico.

It is this fact which removes the study of the theatre of the past from the duller realms of academic research to the plane of artistic inspiration. The greater masters of the present-day stage have realized the power that lay in the theatre of the Greeks, of the medieval mystery writers, of the Renascence Italians, and have striven to seize from their efforts those elements which have significance for our own times. True progress in the world of the theatre, however, comes only when audience and scenic artists are in close agreement and harmony of tone, and the efforts of a Reinhardt, a Gordon Craig, a Stanislavski, a Jessner, and a Copeau will reach fulfilment only when the public as a whole can appreciate their efforts intelligently, can show some knowledge of the theatres of the past and can judge for themselves the problems which the artist-directors are at present working out in solitary seclusion. We are in the midst of a great and inspiring dramatic period, and it behoves us to aid those who are striving as artists did of old to reach new conceptions ; that we may do only by thus acquiring a conscious basis for the judgment of their efforts.

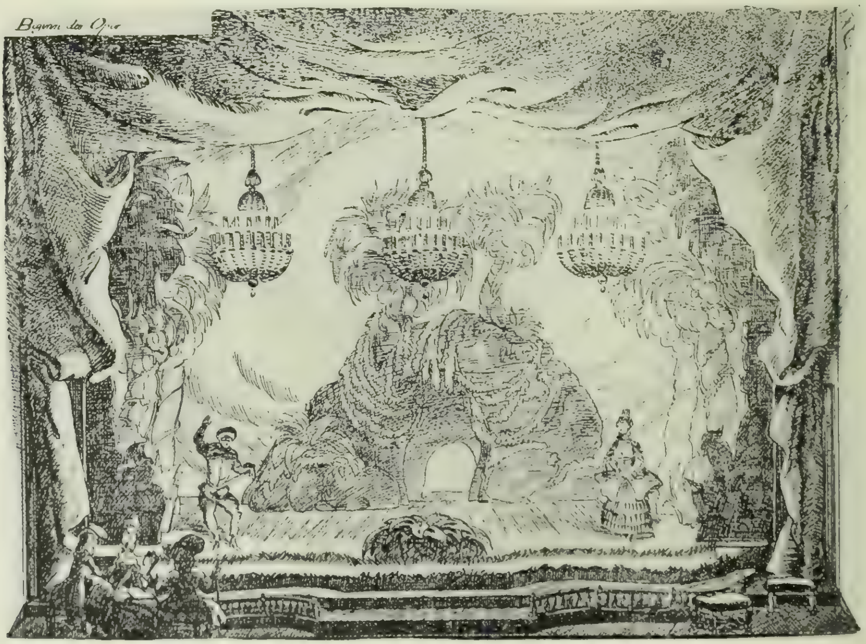

Fig. 260. THE RETURN TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
A design by Ernst Stern for Reinhardt's production of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, 1912.
From Sayler, *op. cit.*

APPENDIX A

A NOTE ON COSTUME ON THE ELIZABETHAN STAGE

The question of Elizabethan ſtage coſtume, touched upon briefly at pp. 136–137 and 177–183, is one which has been peculiarly neglected. Sir Edmund Chambers apparently does not deal with it at all in his *Elizabethan Stage*, and, although Professor Creizenach and Professor Thorndike note in passing that certain conventional dresses were used in Shakespearian playhouses, the general assumption is that throughout the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries plays were put forward in contemporary costumes. It is this assumption which has led to the production of *Hamlet* (and other plays) in 'modern dress.' A more careful analysis, however, of Elizabethan conventions tends to prove that Oscar Wilde's overſtrained and not always scholarly thesis in *The Truth of Masks* possesses more than a ſtyliſtic value, and that the general assumption is based on a too hurried examination of the evidence at hand, or even is due to a complete neglect of it.

The subject, as I have endeavoured to show, cannot be rightly considered until we take into our survey the theatrical traditions, not only of the Elizabethan, but of the Georgian era as well. The eighteenth-century prints, some of which I have reproduced in this volume, may tell us much of the conditions operating in the seventeenth-century playhouse. So too a study of French and Italian ſtage dresses often has a very direct bearing upon the conventions of the Elizabethan ſtage. Such a ſtudy, however, cannot be entered into here, and I wish merely to draw attention to a few indications in plays and property lists which seem to have a connexion with this subject.

That Hamlet, Macbeth, and others normally wore Elizabethan dress no one can deny; the later prints prove that Garrick and his compeers retained what was undoubtedly an ancient tradition. The fact remains, however, that other characters, distinguished by country or age, abandoned Elizabethan coſtume in favour of robes more correct historically or imaginatively more appealing. It may not be inopportune here to indicate some references to the types of special coſtumes outlined in Chapter X (pp. 177–183). These may best be considered separately.

(1) TURKISH COSTUMES

"iiij genesareyes [janizaries'] gownes . . . iiij Turckes hedes . . . 1 Mores [Moor's] cotte" are mentioned by Henslowe in his 1598 inventories. The "hedes" may refer to turbans or headpieces: thus in Kyd's *Soliman and Perseda* Lucina asks Basilisco:

> But how chance,
> Your turkish bonnet is not on your head?

and he replies:

> Because I now am Chriſtian againe,

proving that the "turkish bonnet" had been worn in the earlier part of the play and was some typical headgear. We may, it seems to me, refer from public stage costumes to those worn at Court; while it would be foolish to suppose that the ordinary playhouse costumes were as rich as those worn at royal festivals, it must be presumed that there would not be a vast cleavage between the two. In Professor Feuillerat's *Documents relating to the Office of the Revels in the Time of Queen Elizabeth*[1] we learn that Turkish commoners in 1560 wore "hedpeces of yellowe golde sarsnet" and "longe gounes of damaske," while Turkish magistrates had "longe streighte turkye gownes of redd cloth of gold," with "longe Sleves" and "Capes of the same figured clothe of gold." Among Inigo Jones' drawings for *Britannia Triumphans* is a 'Turk' dressed in wide trousers, a close-fitting jacket, and a turban.

From these notices, added to the *Titus Andronicus* sketch (Fig. 152), we may hazard the suggestion that Eastern characters wore (1) either wide "Turkish trousers" (like the figure to the extreme left of the last-mentioned drawing) or tights (like Aaron), (2) close-fitting boots, as shown in Aaron here or in eighteenth-century prints, (3) a close-fitting tunic with puffed sleeves which could be rolled back, (4) a turban, and often (5) a loose dressing-gown-like robe with long sleeves. As a weapon the Eastern characters normally carried a scimitar—assuredly not an Elizabethan instrument of offence. This curved scimitar is shown in the *Titus Andronicus* drawing, and is referred to frequently in contemporary drama.

> He dies vpon my Semitars sharpe point

cries Aaron in *Titus Andronicus*, while Basilisco in *Soliman and Perseda* declares that

> with this Semitor,
> [I], alle on foote . . .
> Endured some three or foure howers combat,

and Soliman remarks that Perseda's white neck

> Will breake the edge of my keene Semitor.

The Prince of Morocco in *The Merchant of Venice* is made to swear

> By this scimitar
> That slew the Sophy.

(2) Roman Costumes

The Roman costume is less easy to disentangle and define, although there are examples of it among Inigo Jones' drawings. It is probable that the figure second on the left in the *Titus Andronicus* sketch is in this dress. Gowns must have been worn by persons of higher estate, and Shakespeare, following Plutarch, seems to make special use of the "woolvish gown" which had to be worn by the candidate for the consulship. The eighteenth-century prints show well the mingling of contemporary and ancient in this conventional dress.

(3) Allegorical Costumes and Costumes of Deities

There are many indications in plays and elsewhere that allegorical figures and the classical deities wore distinctive dress. It is impossible here to indicate all the types mentioned, and the following list must, accordingly, be regarded as severely selective.

i. *Neptune.* "j sewtte for Nepton" is mentioned by Henslowe, and the same inventoryist chronicles "Nepun forcke & garland."

ii. *Juno.* Henslowe records "Junoes cotte," and Inigo Jones has a sketch of her costume (Inigo Jones, *Masque Designs*, Malone and Walpole Societies, No. 102, Plate XIV).

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[1] I omit references here to the other volume of Revels accounts, although that contains many matters of interest concerning costume at an earlier period.

iii. *Phaeton.* Henslowe has "j Faeytone sewte" as well as "ij leather anteckes cottes with basses, for Fayeton."

iv. *Dido.* In Henslowe we find mention of "Dides robe."

v. *Iris.* "Ierosses head, and raynbowe" appear in Henslowe. Inigo Jones has a sketch of Iris (*op. cit.*, No. 7, Plate III) and another along with Juno (*op. cit.*, No. 102, Plate XIV). It will be remembered that both of these appear in Shakespeare's *The Tempest.*

vi. *Mercury.* "Mercures wings" appear in Henslowe, and no doubt the "Cadeseus" was used by this divinity.

vii. *Ghosts.* Henslowe mentions "j gostes sewt, and j gostes bodeyes" as a special property. The stage directions in dramas bidding some character to "enter like a ghost" no doubt refer to this, a particularized, costume.

(4) Animal Costumes

There is frequent mention of animal costumes both in Henslowe and in the Revels accounts. Shakespeare has his ass's head and lion in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and his bear in *The Winter's Tale.* Among Henslowe's entries are "j lyone skin . . . j bears skyne . . . j bores heade . . . j dragon . . . j lyone . . . ij lyon heades . . . j great horse . . . j black dogge." Twelve "Lyons heades counterfeicte" were made for the Revels' Office in 1578, while an "artificiall lyon, and horse" appear in a 1581 account. Inigo Jones has a human lion of this type among his drawings for *Tempe Restor'd* (*op. cit.*, No. 146); among these drawings may be noted also an ape (No. 147) and an ass (No. 148). Along with these animal costumes should be recorded "Serberosse [Cerberus'] iij heades" in Henslowe.

(5) Professional, Foreign, and Similar Costumes

That Portia wore a lawyer's gown we must assume, and that the artizans of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* were distinguished in costume from the aristocrats is certain. The habiliments of the various trades and professions must have appeared regularly on the Elizabethan stage. Again a few references must stand for many. Henslowe records several times "freyers gownes" with "hoodes to them," and friars are of frequent occurrence in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century drama. "j senetores gowne, j hoode, and 5 senetores capes" points to a regular dress for civic authorities in foreign-set plays; the costumes of the Venetian senators in the Revels accounts may be compared with these. Shylock wears his Jewish gaberdine. Among Henslowe's records are frequently mentioned special garments for Robin Hood plays: "j green gown for Maryan . . . vj grene cottes for Roben Hoode . . . Roben Hoodes sewte"—all of these point to specialized costumes. Among the others we may note "ij whitt sheperdes cottes," "j fooles coate, cape, and babell," "Merlen gowne and cape," "j carnowll [cardinal's] hatte," and "j hode for the wech." Some foreign nationalities, and some particular foreign characters, seem also to have been thus distinguished. "ij Danes sewtes, and j payer of Danes hosse" are mentioned, as are also Spanish dresses. In addition we find "j payer of hosse for the Dowlfen," "Vartemar sewtte," "Tamberlynes cotte, with coper lace . . . and . . . Tamberlanes breches, of crymson velluet." Special properties were apportioned to such characters. "j helmet with a dragon," "j poopes miter," "iij Imperiall crownes" and "j crown with a sone" could have been worn only by certain marked characters. Perhaps among these figures may be noted the Druid pictured by Inigo Jones (*op. cit.*, No. 320) for Carlell's play of *The Passionate Lovers.*

(6) HISTORICAL COSTUMES

When we turn to the Folio, open it at *Henry VIII*, and read the following passage we feel that Shakespeare or Fletcher (for our purpose it matters not which) was not so blind to the purely pictorial value of the history he dramatized as we often assume.

> THE ORDER OF THE CORONATION
>
> 1 *A liuely Flouriſh of Trumpets.*
>
> 2 *Then, two Iudges*
>
> 3 *Lord* Chancellor, *with Purſe and Mace before him.*
>
> 4 Quirriſters *ſinging.* Muſicke.
>
> 5 Maior of London, *bearing the Mace. Then* Garter, *in his Coate of Armes, and on his head he wore a Gilt Copper Crowne.*
>
> 6 Marqueſſe Dorſet, *bearing a Scepter of Gold, on his head, a Demy Coronall of Gold. With him, the Earle of* Surrey, *bearing the Rod of Siluer with the Doue, Crowned with an Earles Coronet. Collars of Eſſes.*
>
> 7. Duke of Suffolke, *in his Robe of Eſtate, his Coronet on his head, bearing a long white Wand, as High Steward. With him, the Duke of* Norfolke, *with the Rod of Marſhalſhip, a Coronet on his head. Collars of Eſſes.*
>
> 8 A Canopy, *borne by foure of the* Cinque-Ports, *vnder it the Queene in her Robe, in her haire, richly adorned with Pearle, Crowned. On each ſide her, the Biſhops of* London, *and* Wincheſter.
>
> 9 *The* Olde Dutcheſſe of Norfolke, *in a Coronall of Gold, wrought with Flowers, bearing the Queenes Traine.*
>
> 10 *Certaine* Ladies *or* Counteſſes, *with plaine Circlets of Gold, without Flowers.*

The average Elizabethan, no doubt, had but a vague conception of the details in the dress of his forefathers, but we can hardly suppose that he was totally ignorant of the fact that costumes had changed, nor can we suppose that the complete presentation of an historical tragedy in Elizabethan doublet and hose would have appeared to him perfectly fitting. Once more, we may hardly presume a complete cleavage between court or university plays and plays given in the public theatres; at least part of the audience for both was the same. That thoughts of historical costume stirred the universities is amply proved by the letter sent by the Master of Trinity on January 28, 1594(5), to the Chancellor, requesting the loan of some special dresses:

> Whereas we intend . . . to sett forth certaine Comoedies and one Tragoedye, there being in that Tragoedie sondry personages of greatest estate to be represented in auncient princely attire w^{ch} is no where to be had, but within the office of the Roabes at the Tower: it is our humble request . . . that upon sufficient securitie we might be furnished from thence with such meete necessaries as are required . . . w^{ch} favor we have founde heretofore.

Among Henslowe's records, besides a collection of general attributes of royalty and the like, including "j globe, & j golden scepter . . . j wooden hatchett . . . jx eyorn targates . . . j copper targate . . . iiij wooden targates . . . j playne crowne . . . j crown with a sone," we have mention of "j greve armer," and "j longe sorde," which seemingly were "auncient." "Harye the v. satten dublet" and "Harey the fyftes vellet gowne" seem to point to a special dress—otherwise they need hardly have belonged to a particular character, but could have served for many. Shakespeare's *Henry VI* makes mention of tabards and crested helmets, characteristics of a bygone age, while in the *Richard II* play contained in the famous Egerton manuscript reference is made to those strange toe-chained shoes which had, in the Elizabethan age, long vanished from men's memories.

In surveying this whole question it appears to me that too much is made of the references in Shakespeare's historical and Roman plays to 'caps,' 'bonnets,' 'doublets,' and the like. There is no doubt that Elizabethan features must have appeared in all costumes, but that does not militate against the supposition (which seems to me almost a certainty) that along with certain elements of Elizabethan dress went special characteristics intended to be symbolic of past ages or of other lands. If this be assumed we find that nearly every play of Shakespeare's will contain some character or characters distinguished by particular dress. One might assume that most of the persons in *Romeo* were in Elizabethan garments, but the friar and perhaps the apothecary would give a flavour of antiquity. *Troilus*, *Coriolanus*, *Titus*, *Timon*, *Julius Caesar*, *Antony*, and *Pericles* might all contain elements of Roman costume, which might also appear, with other features, in *Cymbeline*. For *Hamlet* we must remember Henslowe's "Danes' suits," for *Macbeth* the witches' garments, for *Lear* the costume shown in the *Titus Andronicus* drawing, and for *Othello* the Eastern dress. Several of the comedies, of course, are set in almost contemporary times, and, in any case, we do not need in comedy the same atmosphere as we require in history play or tragedy. Yet even here there are fools, fairies, artisans who grow asses' heads, magicians, friars, lawyers, Russians, Jews, and bears—a pretty little collection of characters who would appear in diversified garments on the contemporary stage. The assumption that by putting Shakespeare in modern dress we come back to Elizabethan methods of staging is not so certain as it appears at first sight; perhaps that escape for the modern producer is as false as the methods employed by an Irving and a Tree.

APPENDIX B

EXTRACTS FROM LEONE DE' SOMMI

THE *Dialoghi in materia di rappresentazioni sceniche*, by Leone Hebreo de' Sommi, or de' Somi, written shortly after 1550 and preserved now only in a unique manuscript at Parma, show well the more progressive and far-sighted views of theatre-workers in the sixteenth century. The *Dialoghi* had been noted as early as 1789 by Risbaldo Orsini di Orbassano, and quotations have appeared in several Italian works on the theatre. It has been thought worth while to present a few extracts here for English readers. Stress may be laid on the fact that Leone de' Sommi was a practical dramatist and the manager of a theatre, so that his words are not purely theoretical.

(i) On Choosing and Casting a Play

> [1] *Veridico.* Prima io mi sforzarei d'hauer comedia che mi satisfacesse, con di quelle osseruationi che dissi principalmente conuenirsi a tali poemi, e sopra tutto di bella prosa contesta, et che non fosse noiosa per molti soliloquij, o lunghi episodij, o dicerie impertinenti ; per ciò ch'io concorro nel parere di coloro che hanno detto quella comedia esser perfetta, che leuandone una poca parte resti imperfetta. Ma noua la comedia uorrei, se fosse possibile, o almeno poco nota, fuggendo più ch'io potessi le stampate, quantunque piu belle. Si per che ogni cosa noua piu piace ; et si per esser parer quasi comune, che le comedie, delle quali lo spettatore ha notitia, rieschino poco grate, per di molte cagioni, tra le quali, principale cred' io che sia questa : che douendo l'histrione ingegnarsi, et sforzarsi quanto piu può d'ingannar lo spettatore in tanto che li paiono ueri i successi che se gli rappresentano, sapendo l'ascoltante prima quello che hà a dire et a fare il recitante li par poi troppo aperta et sciocca menzogna et la fauola perde di quel suo naturale, con che ella ha sempre da esser accompagnata, onde l'uditore quasi schernito non solo uilipende lo spettacolo ma disprezza anco se medesimo che come fanciullo si sia lasciato condure a udir, come si dice in prouerbio, la nouella de l'oca, il che non auiene cosi delle comedie noue, per che quantunque l'huomo sappia da principio hauer da udir cose non uere, stando pero atento alla nouita de i casi, par che ei si lasci ingannar da se medesimo a poco a poco tanto che gl' assembra di ueder in effetto quei successi che se gl' appresentano, se pero gl' histrioni saranno bene essercitati come gli si richiede. . . .

---

[1] A translation is appended :

Veridico. First I should endeavour to obtain a play that satisfied me with those elements which I said especially concern such works of art, above all written in a good prose style and not made tedious by many soliloquies or long drawn out episodes or useless dialogue; for I agree with those who say that a play is perfect when the omitting of the smallest part renders it imperfect. I should desire a new play, if possible, or at least one little known, avoiding as far as I could those which had been printed, however excellent they might be; partly because every novelty gives pleasure and partly because it is certain that those comedies which the audience knows beforehand have little interest. There are many reasons for this, chief among which, I believe, is the fact that, since the actor has to try as hard as he can to deceive the spectator into the belief that what he sees on the stage is true, if the auditor knows already the dialogue and actions of the piece the whole seems too open and absurd, the plot loses that impression of reality with which it must always be associated, and the spectator, as if he imagined that he had been laughed at, not only condemns the show but despises himself for having childishly gone, as the proverb says, on a wild goose chase. This does not occur in the presentation of new plays, for, however much the spectator realizes from the beginning that he is going to listen to fictional things, yet as he remains intent upon the novelty of the events, it seems that little by little he deceives himself and allows himself to be cheated until he imagines—if the actors are as accomplished as they ought to be—that he is really looking upon an actual series of real actions. .

Massimiano. Now that you have said enough of the choice of a comedy tell us how you produce a play after it has been chosen.

Veridico. First I have all the parts carefully copied out and then, after choosing the actors who seem to me most fit for the various *rôles* . . . I gather them all together in one room and give each one that part for which he seems most suited. Then I get them to read the whole play in order that they . . . may learn the plot or at least that part which concerns them, impressing on all their minds the nature of the characters they have to imitate. Then I dismiss them and give them time to learn their parts.

Massimiano. Hor sia detto assai quanto alla elettione della comedia et ditene eletta che sia come ui gouernate.

Veridico. Prima io ne cauo tutte le parti ben corrette e quindi, eletti i personaggi che mi paiono più atti . . . li riduco tutti insieme et consegnato a ciascuno quella parte che piu le si conuiene fò legger loro tutta la comedia tanto che . . . siano instrutti del soggetto di essa o almeno di quello che a lor tocca, imprimendo a tutti nella mente la qualita del personaggio che hanno da imitare ; et licentiati con questo le dò tempo di poter imparar le parti loro.

(ii) On Stage Costume

[1] *Veridico.* Parlando dunque de gl' habiti, et lasciando il trattar de i modi antichi quando i uecchi tutti di bianco, et i giouani di uarij colori si uestiuano . . . per che cosi fatte osseruationi sarebbono per la uarietà de gl' usi, uani o poco conosciuti ; dicoui principalmente ch'io mi sforzo di uestir sempre gl' histrioni più nobilmente che mi sia possibile, ma che siano però proporzionati fra loro, atteso che . . . mi par, dico, che l'habito sontuoso accresca molto di riputatione et di uaghezza alle comedie, et molto piu alle tragedie. Nè mi restarei di uestir un seruo di ueluto o di raso colorato, pur che l'habito del suo patrone fosse con ricami, o con ori, cotanto sontuoso, che hauessero fra loro la debita proportione. . . .

Massimiano. Non è dubbio che il ueder quei cenci, che altri mette tal uolta attorno ad uno auaro, o ad un famiglio, toglie assai di riputatione allo spettacolo.

Veridico. Ben si puo uestir uno auaro, o un uillano ancora, di certi habiti che hanno nel lor grado del sontuoso, ne però si esce dal naturale. . . . Io mi ingegno poi quanto piu posso, di uestire i recitanti fra loro differentissimi. . . . Hor se io haurò (per gratia di essempio) da uestir tre o quattro serui, uno ne uestirò di bianco, con un capello ; uno di rosso con un berettino in capo ; l'altro a liurea, di diuersi colori ; et l'altro adornarò, per auentura, con una beretta di ueluto, et un paio di maniche di maglia . . . auuertendo . . . che . . . siano diuersi tutti fra loro quanto piu si possa. . . . Nè solo mi sforzo io di uariare i recitanti fra loro, ma mi affatico ancora potendo di trasformare ciascuno da l'esser suo naturale, accio che non sia così tosto riconosciuto da li spettatori . . . però che quando lo spettatore conosce il recitante, se gli leua in parte quel dolce inganno in cui deuressimo tenerlo. . . . Ma per che ogni nouita piu piace assai, riesce molto piaceuole spettacolo ueder in scena habiti barbari et astratti dalle nostre usanze. . . . Et per questo, piu che per altra cagione, fo io che la scena della comedia nostra che uedrete martedì . . . si finge Costantinopoli, per poter introdurui habiti cosi di donne come di huomeni, inusitati fra noi. . . . Nel uestir delle quali [tragedie], dourà sempre chi le guida diligentissimo, non uestendo mai . . . i suoi interlocutori a i modi che modernamente si costuma, ma nelle maniere, che su le scolture antiche, o su le pitture figurate si ueggono, con quei manti et con quelli abbigliamenti, co quali si figurano cosi uagamente quei personaggi de gl' antichi secoli. . . . Non è cosi mal fornita guardarobba d'un principe, che non se ne possa cauare da uestire ordinariamente ogni gran tragedia, se colui che la conduce sarà galant' huomo, da sapersi seruire di quello che ci hà, et ualersi di alcuni drappi intieri, et di alcuni paramenti, et simili cose, da far manti, soprauesti, et stole, con cinture, et nodi, ad imitatione de gl' antichi, senza tagliarli, ne guastarli, in parte alcuna.

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[1] Translation :

Veridico. In speaking of costume—and leaving aside the methods of the ancients whereby old men were all dressed in white and youths in coloured robes, for such symbolic indications, owing to diversity of use, would now be impossible or but little understood—I tell you that I aim, first of all, at dressing the actors as richly as possible, yet with proportionate variations, for sumptuous costumes seem to me to add much to the beauty of comedies and more so of tragedies. I should not hesitate to dress a servant in velvet or coloured satin, provided that his master's costume had sufficient embroidery and gold ornament to make a proper distinction between their garments. . . .

Massimiano. Unquestionably the sight of those rags which are worn sometimes by a miser or a servant detracts from the glory of a scene.

Veridico. Yet a miser or a servant can be clad in garments which have something rich about them and yet are true to nature. . . . I try as far as possible to give the actors the most widely differing costumes. . . . Supposing I had to costume three or four servants, I should clothe one in white with a hat ; another in red with a small cap on his head : another in mixed livery ; and to the fourth I might perhaps give a velvet hat and a pair of mail sleeves . . . so that they might be as different from one another as possible. . . . Not only do I aim at contrasting one actor with another, but I try to transform each one so that he shall not be immediately recognized by the spectators . . . for when a spectator recognizes an actor he loses some of that pleasant pretence which it is our object to maintain. . . . But, since novelty is always sure to please, an audience takes delight in seeing foreign and strange costumes on the stage. . . . For this more than for any other reason I have contrived that the setting of the comedy you are to see on Tuesday should be Constantinople, so that I can introduce men's and women's dresses of a kind we do not wear. . . . In costuming tragedies a careful producer must not be satisfied with modern clothes but must dress his actors after the fashion of antique sculptures or paintings, with the same mantles and attires in which those persons in past centuries were so beautifully depicted. . . . No Prince's wardrobe is so poorly equipped as to lack materials for the dressing of a great tragedy so long as the producer is a clever man, who can make use of what is given him and who has the skill to convert pieces of stuff, draperies, and the like into mantles, cloaks, and vestments, with girdles and knots after the antique fashion, without cutting or destroying them at all.

(iii) On Lighting

[1] *Santino.* A che seruono et doue hanno origine quei tanti lumi che si accendono su per i tetti delle case in scena, i quai lumi, non mi pare che seruino punto al bisogno della prospettiua, et per allumare la scena ui ueggo torchie a bastanza?

Veridico. Io credo hauerui detto et replicato, che le comedie sono introdotte per giouar con diletto; et solleuamento de i pensieri noiosi et per questa cagione ui dissi et ui torno a dire, che sopra tutte auertenze, deue auuertir lo histrione di recitar sempre in modo giocondo et suegliato; presuponendo dunque noi che il poeta ci dia una fauola piaceuole et grata et che lo histrione la rappresenti con gioconda maniera ha bisogno che anco l'architetto, per quella parte che egli ha nella comedia, rappresenti letitia et gioia, et per che l'uso moderno et antico è et fu sempre, che per segno d'allegrezza s'acendono fochi et lumi per le strade, su per i tetti delle case et sopra le torri; di qui ha poi hauuto origine questo uso, per imitar quelle occasioni di allegria.

Santino. Nelle tragedie dunque non conuerranno tai lumi?

Veridico. Ne forse in tutte disconuerranno per che oltre che nel principio massime, le tragedie sono alegrissime . . . non sara mai isconueneuole, il destar l'animo alla letitia piu che sia possibile. . . . Io mi son trouato a condur . . . una tragedia et essendo stata la scena allumata giocondissimamente, per tutto il tempo che i successi de la historia furono allegri: quando incomincio poi il primo caso dolente, della inopinata morte d'una reina, onde il coro esclamando, stupisce come il sole potesse patire di ueder tanto male, feci . . . che in quello istante la maggior parte de i lumi de la scena che non seruiuano alla prospettiua furono uelati o spenti. . . .

Massimiano. Hor ditene di gratia per qual cagione questi uostri lumi sono per lo piu con trasparenti uetri et con uarij colori adombrati?

Veridico. Questo fu inuentione di coloro che conobbero quello che molti non auuertiscono, cioè, che il lume il quale brillante percote ne gli occhi offende troppo estremamente chi di continouo ha da mirarlo. Bisognando dunque allo spettatore fissar sempre gli occhi su per la scena a mirar hora in questa parte di quella et hora nell' altra i uarij successi, fu prouuisto con questa inuentione di non lasciare offendere, uelando i lumi. . . . Come sapete è cosa naturale che l'huomo stando al bino uede molto meglio una cosa che di lontano s'alluca: che non sarebbe stando in luogo luminoso: per che la vista ua piu unita all' oggetto senza uagare o, secondo il parere de

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[1] Translation:

Santino. What is the use and the origin of those lights on the rooftops of houses on the stage? They do not seem to me to aid the perspective, and for purposes of illumination there are torches enough.

Veridico. I think I have said and repeated the fact that comedies are presented for the purpose of enjoyment and of alleviating gloomy thoughts; for that reason I said to you, and I repeat it again, that the actor must be bidden to speak his lines in a happy and bright manner. Now, granted that the author gives us a pleasant, charming plot and that the actor interprets it in a joyous spirit, so that it is necessary that the architect on his part should represent gladness and joy, and since both modern and ancient custom is and has been to set fires and torches in the streets, on housetops, and on towers as a sign of gladness, therefore this is the origin of the convention: to imitate such glad celebrations.

Santino. These lights, then, could not be used in tragedy?

Veridico. Perhaps they would not be so out of place there, since generally tragedies open in happiness [and so it would not be unfitting] to arouse the mind as much as possible to this happiness. . . . Once I had to produce . . . a tragedy. The stage was brightly illuminated through all that part of the action in which the episodes were happy: as soon as the first unhappy incident occurred—the unexpected death of a queen—while the chorus was in exclamation that the sun could suffer to see such horror, I contrived . . . that at that very instant most of the stage lights not used for the perspective were darkened or extinguished. . . .

Massimiano. Will you please tell us now why your lights are mostly shaded with transparent and coloured glass?

Veridico. That was the invention of those who realized what few pay attention to—namely, that a brilliant light striking on the eye irritates the person looking at it for long. As the spectator has to turn his eyes always upon the stage to see the actions passing now on this side and now on that, this invention was established to minimize the annoyance by the veiling of the lights. . . . As you know, in nature, a man standing in shadow sees much better whatever is brightly lit at a distance, than does one who stands in an illuminated position: for the sight moves with less hesitation and with greater concord to the object, or, as the perspectivists think, the object comes more harmoniously to the apprehension of the eye. Hence I place the fewest possible lights in the auditorium, while at the same time I endeavour to illuminate the stage brightly; the very few lamps in the auditorium I place behind the spectators in order that these should not interfere with their view of the stage.

i peripatetici, l'obietto si viene piu unitamente ad appresentare a l'occhio. Et però non pongo io, se non pochissimi lumi nella sala facendo splendidissima la scena e quei pochi ancora pongh' io da tergo a gli ascoltanti accio che la interpositione di tal lumi non offusca loro la uista.[1]

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[1] Since preparing this appendix I have learned that an edition of the *Dialoghi* is in preparation. A complete text of these most interesting remarks on the stage will assuredly be welcome. It may be noted that the full name of the author is Judah Leone Ben Isaac Sommo, and that he was a well-known poet, dramatist, and Hebraist, as well as a theatrical director. For his services to Italian literature he was elected a Scrittore Accademico in the Mantuan Accademia degli Invaghiti. Information as to his life and activities is given in *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (1904) under Judah Leone, and by D'Ancona (*op. cit.*, ii. 401–427), Luigi Rasi (*I Comici Italiani*, i, 106–112), Peyron (*Nota di storia letteraria*, 1884), and M. Steinschneider (*Hebräische Bibliographie*, vi, 94). D'Ancona, Rasi, and Ferrari present variously parts of the above and supplementary quotations from his writings. A free translation of selected passages appears in Smith's *The Commedia dell' Arte*. Creizenach (*op. cit.*, vol. iii) notes the importance of his work. Part of the text given above is based on the quotations in Rasi's work.

APPENDIX C

DESIGNS BY GIACOMO TORELLI DA FANO (1608–78)

Among the greater scenic artists of the seventeenth century Giacomo Torelli da Fano is by no means the least interesting or the least important. Not only was he styled in his native country *il grande stregone*—"the great sorcerer"[1]—but he was one of those scenographers who helped to carry the Italian theatre ideals to the rest of Europe. His services were early sought and obtained for the royal performances in France, and some of his greatest triumphs were those associated with the ballets, operas, and tragedies produced at the Court of Louis XIV. At Paris he worked till 1660, when, on his retirement, his envious successor, Gaspare Vigarani, wilfully destroyed what remained of his scenes and his machine effects. Happily, however, many engravings were made of his stage designs, and these at once served to spread his influence during the seventeenth century and serve now to indicate his aims and the achievement of those aims. The designs reproduced in this appendix are taken from four important collections: (1) *Il Bellero Fonte . . . rappresentato nel Teatro Nouissimo in Venetia . . . Giacomo Torelli Da Fano Inuentore delli Apparati*, 1642; (2) *Apparati scenici per lo Teatro Nouissimo di Venetia Nell' anno 1644*; (3) *Feste Theatrali per la Finta Pazza drama del Signor Giulio Strozzi Rappresentate nel piccolo Borbone in Parigi quest anno* MDC.XLV; and (4) *Scene e Machine preparate alle Nozze di Teti Balletto Reale representato nella sala del piccolo Borbone*, 1654. The settings, therefore, illustrate Torelli's work both at the Venetian theatre and at the Parisian Petit Bourbon. They may be classified according to the collections in which they appear.

(1) The interest of Figs. 261, 262, 263, and 264, taken from *Il Bellero Fonte*, is twofold. In the first place, a comparison of these with the design for *Ariane* (Fig. 195) will show that the last-mentioned, if not actually copied from the others, has been at least deeply influenced by the Torelli manner. The buildings forming the side-wings in *Ariane*, both in respect of general architectural effect and in respect of the superimposed statues, at once recall the side-wings in Fig. 263. The background of the *Ariane* engraving is formed by a patch of water ending in a bridge and buildings faintly outlined. Cupids sport in the sky, and a shell, drawn by dolphins, nears the shore. Fig. 261 shows a very similar background. The stretch of water, the distant buildings, the airy figure and the shell—this time drawn by sea-horses—all indicate the connexion between the two designs. Fig. 262 has been added here in order to show the use of a different back-cloth (with the same side-wings) for the purpose of a scenic change. In Fig. 264 (from the same performance) the side-wings have been altered, but it seems probable that the stretch of water between the stage level and the distant prospect formed a constant feature through most of the scenes (Fig. 264). The Romanized costume of the characters, the fiery dragon, and the winged Pegasus all deserve particular notice in the last-mentioned design.

(2) The three designs (Figs. 265, 266, and 267) from the *Apparati scenici* of 1644 have their own interest. Fig. 265 shows a very typical satyric setting such as we find ever associated with the pastoral. The cloud effects and the presentation of deities are here somewhat original. The

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[1] There is a story that he was actually attacked in Venice as a servant of the devil.

second illustration shows a temple with the heavy stage perspective beloved of the period, while the third, Fig. 267, is an equally typical re-rendering of a Serlian tragic scene (*cf.* Figs. 80, 82–84, and 151).

(3) Fig. 268 (the proscenium arch as well as the setting is illustrated), from the *Feste Theatrali*, again suggests the tragic scene, but there is this particular interest in the print, that the divided buildings in the background give more than a mere suggestion of the various passageways shown in the Teatro Olimpico (*cf.* Figs. 85–89). The deities in the clouds bring to mind some of Inigo Jones' designs (*cf.* Fig. 148), and the costumes of the human characters are worthy of special attention.

(4) Finally, we reach the designs for the *Nozze di Teti* of 1654 (Figs. 269, 270, and 271). These plates are accompanied in the collection with lengthy descriptions of the scenic action, and it may not be uninstructive to quote at least part of these accounts. Regarding the first setting (Fig. 269), which shows the Grotto of Cheiron, we read the following :

> La prima Scena dell' Atto primo rappresenta la Grotta di Chirone Centauro, è composta tutta di sassi, e scogli horridissimi, e coperta da vn vastissimo volto pure di sassi, rende insieme vaghezza, & horrore. Nell' alto si vede vn' apertura, per la quale la Grotta riceue il lume, e per doue si vedono le strade di vna montagna, e paesaggio di fuori, che conduce all' entrata della sudetta Grotta, che aprono due porte di rustica architettura fabricate d'vna parte, e d'altra. Si vedono molti, e diuersi sepolcri di maestosa costruttura che chiudono quegli Eroi, che sono stati degni di morir discepoli di cosi grand maestro. Sotto la medesima apertura dell' alto, se ne vede vn' altra, che mostra i più intimi luoghi della sudetta habitazione ; e con ingegnosa regola di prospettiua appare di lontano il fondo, in cui vedesi ancora vn più superbo sepolcro de' gli altri. Quì all' incanto de' maghi, addittati da Chirone, frà tuoni e lampi sorge un carro, sopra di ciu montata Peleo, si leua in aria in mezzo di fiamme, e fumosi vapori, che lasciati à mezzo corso, vola à trauerso della Grotta, vscendo per la sudetta apertura, il fumo suanisce in aria, e la fiamma ricade al fondo.[1]

The presentation of Cheiron and the costumes of the sorcerers are to be noted in this illustration. Fig. 270 shows the same ' side-scenes ' with a different prospect behind. Again we may turn to the description :

> Quì cangiata tutta la prospettiua della Grotta, in luogo di vna lontananza di scogli, si vede vn placidissimo mare, circondato di riue piaceuoli, de colli ameni, e deliziose habitazioni. Comparisce da vna parte vna gran conchiglia piena di pescatori di coralli, che sostenendone nel mezzo loro vn' altra più picciola, n'è portata Teti Dea maritima. Viene sorgendo dal mare di lei inuaghito Nettune, accompagnato da vn coro di Tritoni, e Sirene. . . . Gioue intanto apparisce in aria . . . mentre Giunone gelosa discende su'l proprio carro . . . egli se ne vola al Cielo sù l'aquila, e fa chiudere Dei gran nuuola. Gioue intanto, chiamate dall' inferno le furie ; sorge dalla terra vna testa di formidabil mostro, che esalando fiamme, e fumi sulfurci, vomita quattro furie.[2]

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[1] Translation (this and the following translations have of necessity to paraphrase rather than render literally some of the Italian descriptive passages) :

The first scene of Act I, which shows the Grotto of the Centaur Cheiron, is wholly composed of stones and fearsome rocks ; this, being vaulted with stones, gives an impression at once of beauty and horror. Above, an aperture is seen whence the grotto receives its light, and through which is to be discerned a landscape with mountain paths which lead down to the entrance of the grotto. Two doors of rustic architecture open one on each side. There are to be seen many diverse tombs of a majestic type which enclose the remains of those Heroes who had been worthy to die disciples of so great a master. Beneath the high opening is another which reveals the furthest parts of this dwelling. By the ingenuity of perspective the background seems very distant. There, a more superb tomb than the others can be seen. At the incantation of the sorcerers directed by Cheiron a chariot bearing Peleus rises with thunder and lightning. This rises into the air in the midst of flames and smoke, crossing the grotto and departing through the aperture. The smoke vanishes into the air and the flame recedes into the background.

[2] Here all the perspective of the Grotto changes. In place of a distant view of rocks there is to be seen a calm sea surrounded by lovely shores and gentle slopes and pleasant houses. On one side appears a great shell full of coral fishers who support in their midst another smaller shell which bears Thetis, the goddess of the sea. Neptune, in love with her, and accompanied by a chorus of Tritons and Sirens, rises from the sea. . . . Jove meanwhile appears in the air. . . . Juno, in a fit of jealousy, descends in her own chariot . . . he flies off to Heaven on his eagle and causes the gods to close the great cloud. . . . Juno [" Gioue " above must be an error for " Giunone "], meanwhile, having called the furies from hell, a head of a horrible monster rises from the earth and, with clouds of sulphuric smoke and flames, casts up four furies

APPENDIX C

This illustration is specially interesting for the costumes displayed and for the use of a monster's head which recalls the Hell-mouth of centuries previous (*cf.* Figs. 59, 60, and 63). Fig. 271 shows the setting for a later scene. The immediately preceding scene had been that of Thetis' palace, and now changes come to that as to the others:

> Ercole in fine con Prometheo liberato conducono le Arti liberali sue figliuole, che danzano mentre che dal Cielo cominciano à scendere sei nuuole da' fianchi con diciotto persone sopra. . . . Di sopra si vede un' altra apertura, doue siedono dalle parti diciotto persone, che sono le Intelligenze celesti, che . . . attendono Giunone, e Imeneo.[1]

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[1] At the end Hercules with the liberated Prometheus leads forward the Liberal Arts, his daughters, who dance while six clouds, with eighteen characters on them, begin to descend at the sides from heaven. . . . Above is to be seen another opening, where eighteen characters are seated. These are the Celestial Intelligences who attend on Juno and Hymen.

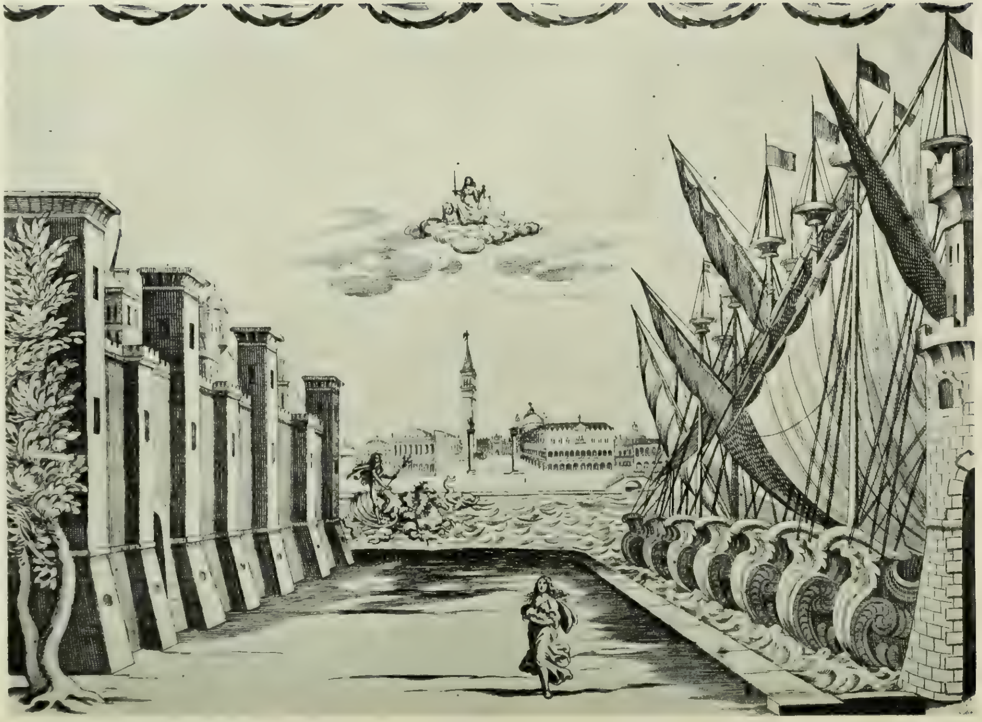

Fig. 261. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli

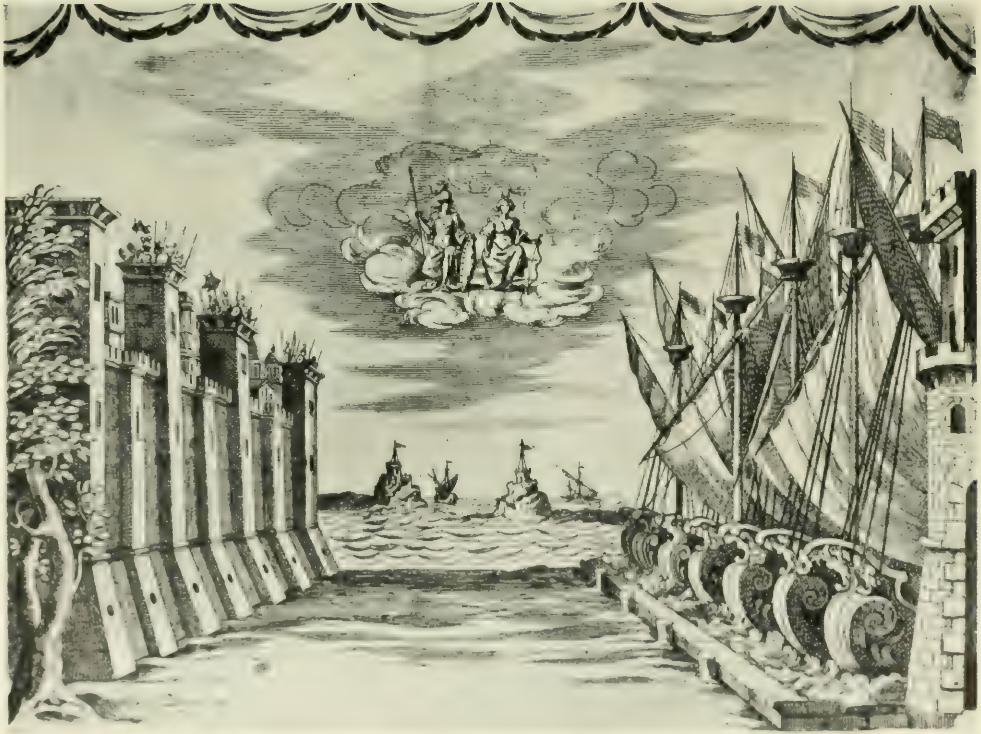

Fig. 262 Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli

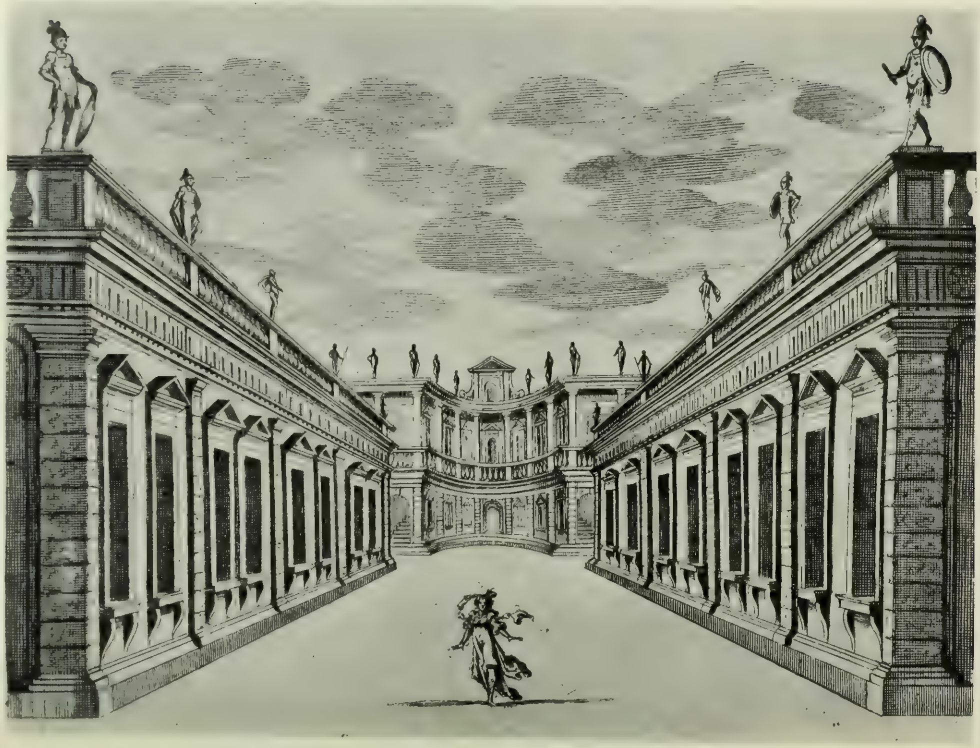

Fig. 263. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli

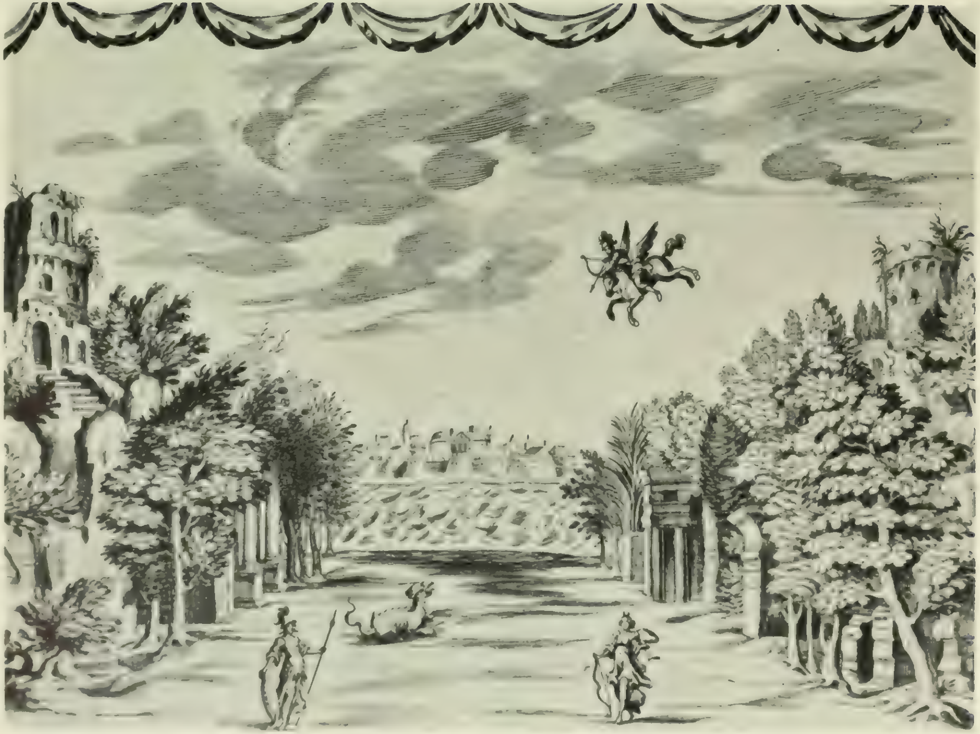

Fig. 264. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli

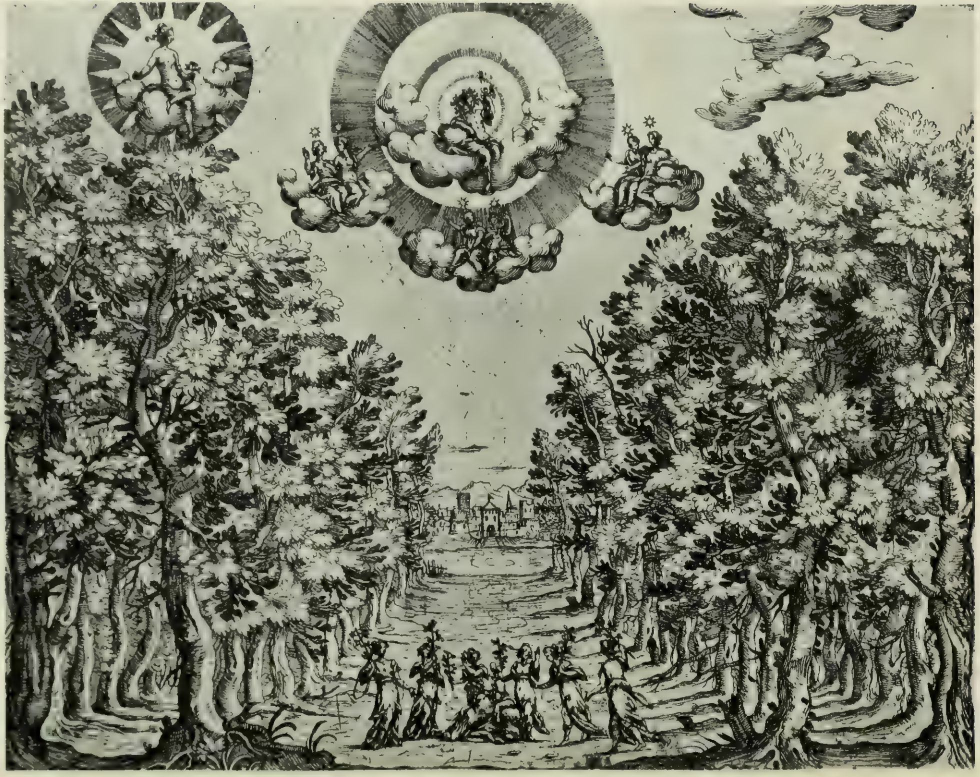

Fig. 265. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli

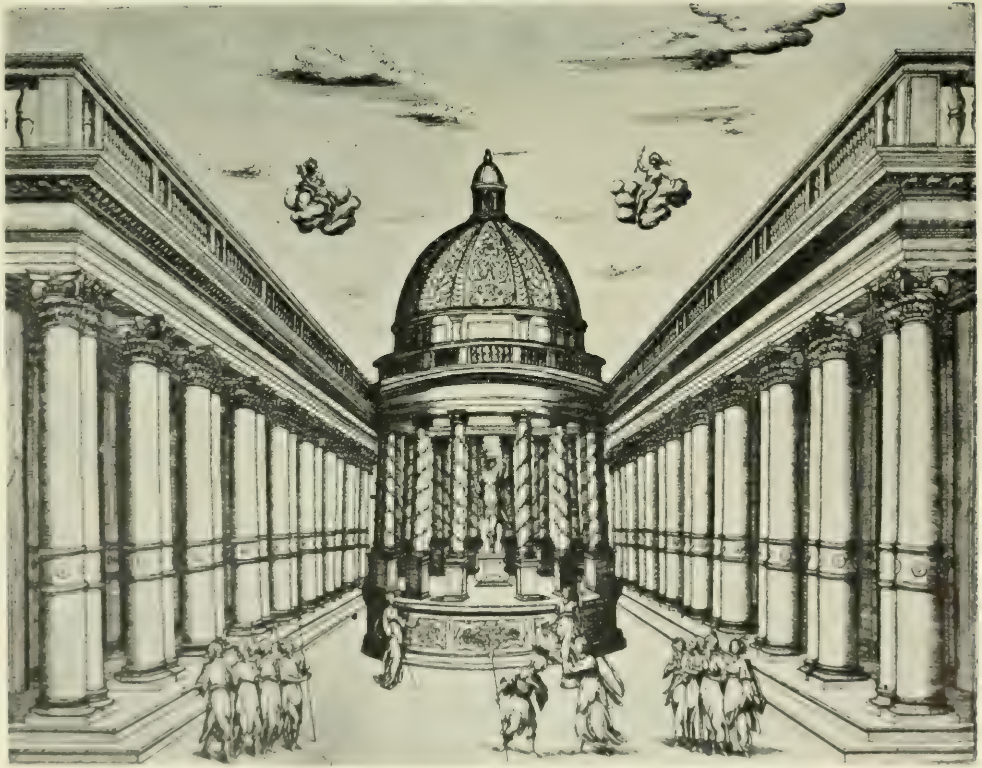

Fig. 206. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli

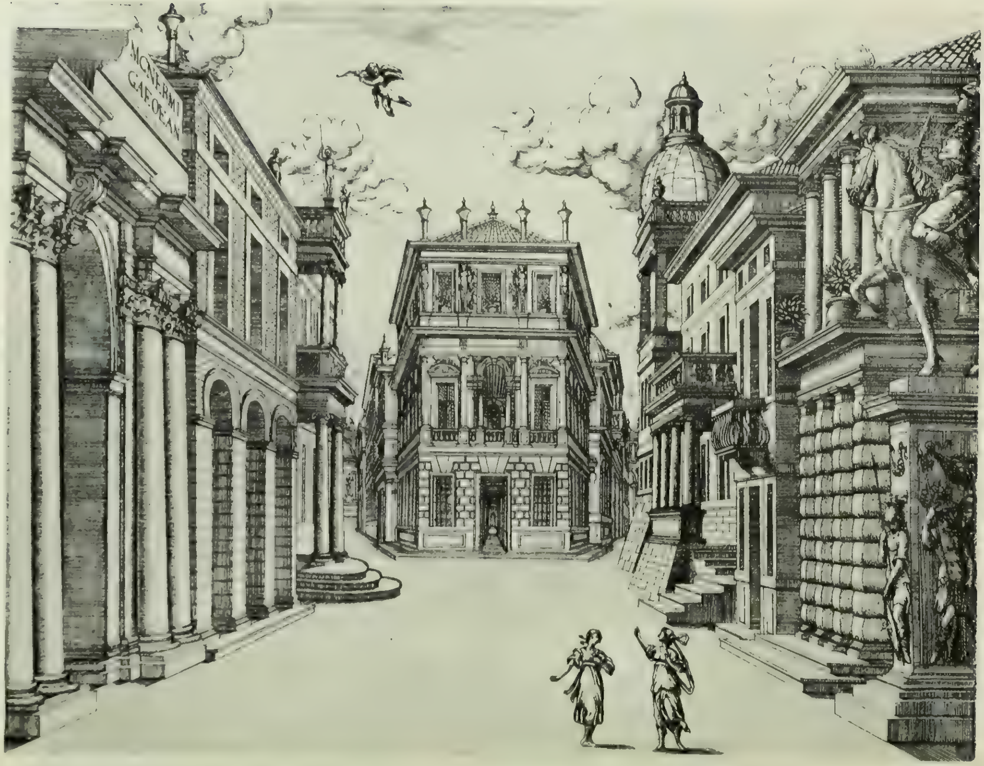

Fig. 267. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli

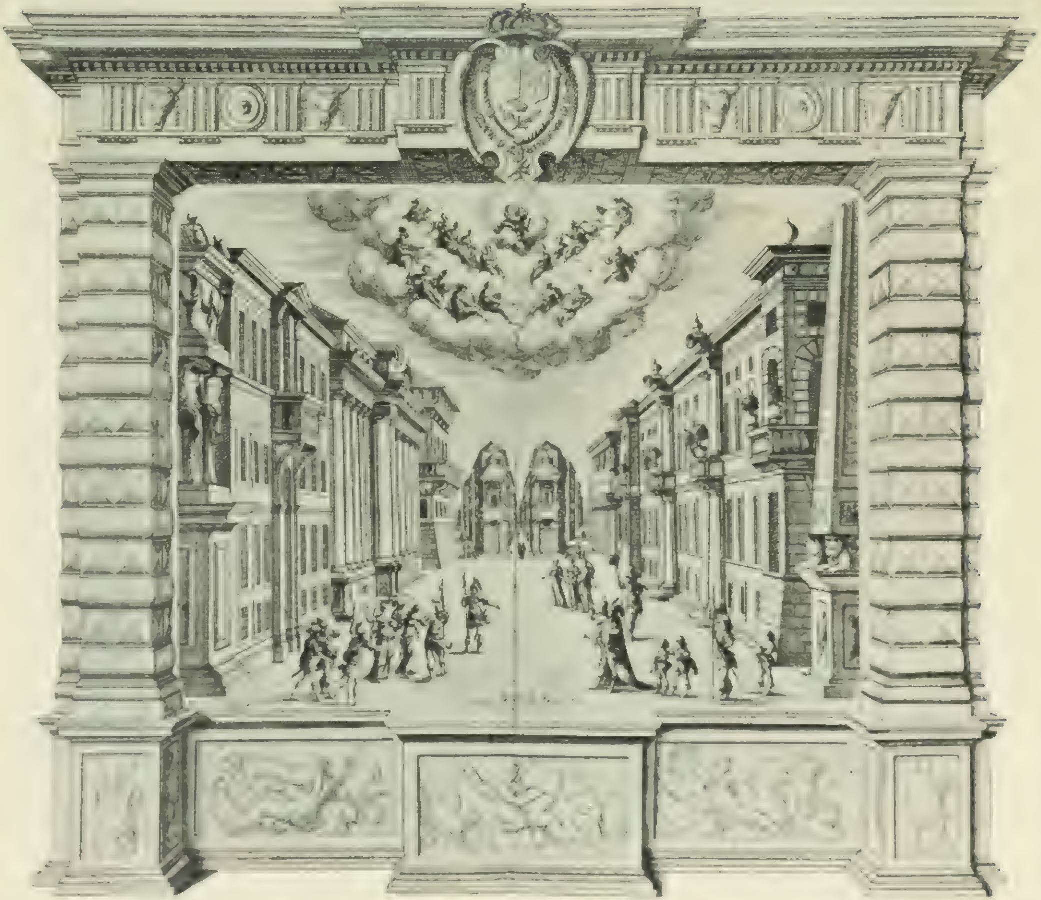

Fig. 268. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli

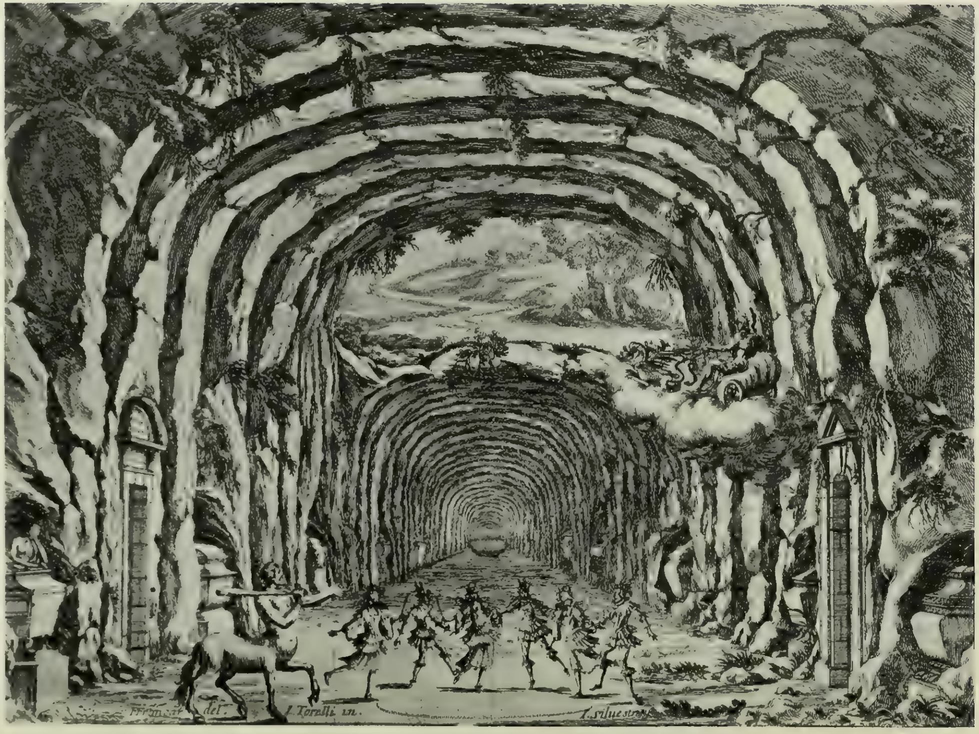
del.
I. Torelli in.
I. Siluestre

Fig. 269. Theatrical Design by Giacomo Torelli

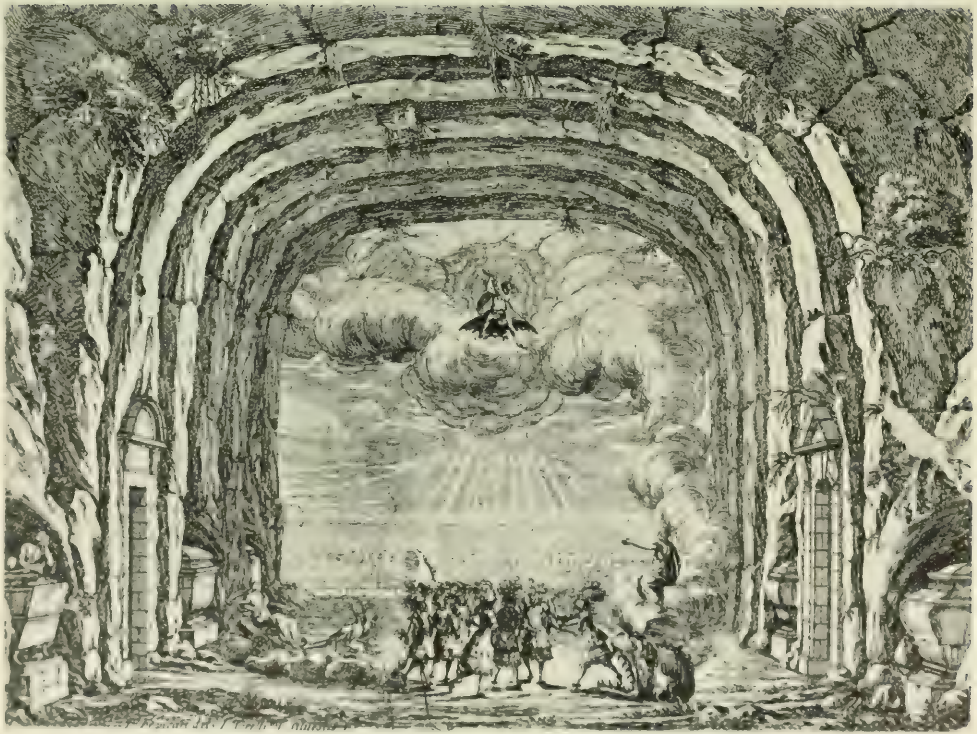

Fig. 276. THEATRICAL DESIGN BY GIACOMO TORELLI

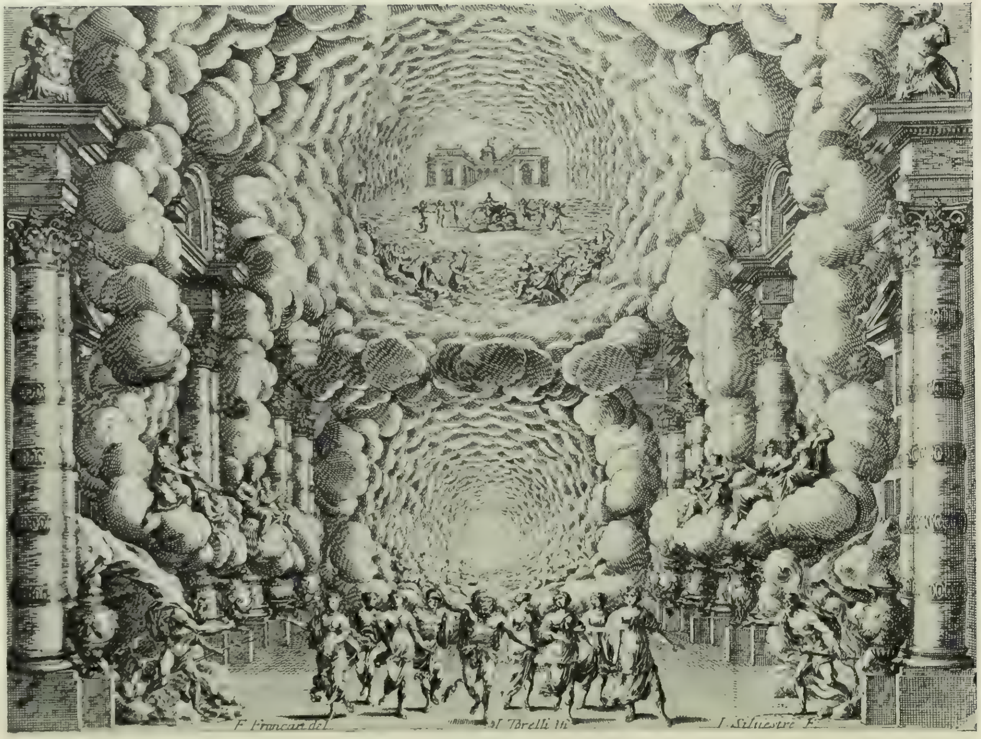
F Francart del.
I Torelli in.
I. Siluestre F.

Fig. 271. THEATRICAL DESIGN BY GIACOMO TORELLI.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE following list of books is selective only. Its object is not to provide anything approaching an exhaustive account of theatrical literature, but merely to indicate a few of those works which may prove useful to the student who wishes to pursue further this subject of playhouses and their *mise en scène*. It will be noted that no mention is made here (1) of volumes on dramatic literature, (2) of actors' biographies, and (3) (in general) of contemporary periodical literature, although many of these works contain matter of interest for our purpose, and all must be studied by the person who would devote himself to a particular period. It must be remembered, also, that books do not form by any means the whole, or even the chief, material for such a student. Actual theatres and theatre remains as well as contemporary drawings, sketches, and prints deserve more attention than printed commentary. There are valuable collections of scenographic work in America (notably those arranged by Mr Robert Gould Shaw at Harvard, by Professor Brander Matthews at Columbia, and by the late Mr H. H. Houdini in New York City), in England (the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum), in Germany (especially the collections at Munich and Dresden), and in Austria (Vienna State Museum). Many Continental theatres possess specialized or general collections, among which may be specially mentioned the Museo Teatrale, housed at the theatre La Scala, Milan; and the Musée of the Comédie-française. (See G. H. M. Monval's *Les Collections de la Comédie-française*, 1897, and E. Dacier's *Le Musée de la Comédie-française*, 1905.)

(i) GENERAL

There are few works which deal with the development of the theatre in its entirety. The best-known book is *La Scenografia* (1902) by Giulio Ferrari; but this, like Karl Mantzius' *A History of Theatrical Art in Ancient and Modern Times* (1903–9), is lacking in exact scholarship. The former, however, gives a full and accurate account of the great schools of scenic artists in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Italy. More scholarly in aim are J. Gregor's *Wiener szenische Kunst. Theaterdekoration* (1924), H. v. Hofmannstal's *Denkmäler des Theaters* (1925), Adolphe Winds' *Der Schauspieler in seiner Entwicklung vom Mysterien- zum Kammerspiel* (1919), and Christian Gaehde's *Das Theater vom Altertum bis zur Gegenwart* (1921). Quirino Angeletti has a suggestive study entitled [illegible] in *Architettura e Arti decorative* (v, 1926). The *Essai sur l'histoire du théâtre* (1893) of Germain Bapst contains valuable matter, but is now largely out of date. For those who read Russian the [illegible], prepared by a group of experts (1923), is very useful. Valuable selections of illustrations are provided in A. Streit's *Das Theater: Untersuchungen über das Theater-Bauwerk bei den klassischen und modernen Völkern* (1903), and Carl Niessen's *Das Bühnenbild: Ein kulturgeschichtlicher Atlas* (1925). No attempt has been made to make a full bibliography of theatrical books, but the following contain the records of important collections: *Catalogo generale della raccolta drammatica [illegible] di Luigi Rasi* (1912) (*cf.* E. Maddalena's *Luigi Rasi e il suo museo drammatico*, 19[illegible]), J. de Filippi's *Essai d'une bibliographie générale du théâtre* (1861), R. F. Arnold's *Bibliographie der deutschen Bühnen seit 1830* (1909), P. A. Merbach's *Bibliographie für Theatergeschichte, 1905–10* (1913), G. Weisstein's *Theater: Bühnengeschichte, Gesellschaften, Ballet* (in [illegible], 1913), and the *Catalogue of the Allen A. Brown Collection of Books relating to the Stage* (1919, Boston Public Library).

Some of the theatrical, as distinct from dramatic, dictionaries are particularly useful. Among these may be numbered the *Allgemeines Theater-Lexikon oder Encyklopädie alles Wissenswerthen für Bühnenkünstler, Dilettanten und Theaterfreunde* (1846), C. M. E. Béquet's *Encyclopédie de l'art dramatique* (1888), F. A. A. Paroisse-Pougin's *Dictionnaire historique et pittoresque du théâtre et des arts qui s'y rattachent* (1885), and A. Bouchard's *La Langue théâtrale* (1878).

Most of the volumes mentioned below in this list contain specialized bibliographies on their own themes, and these, of course, will be used by the student who wishes to study some particular manifestation of theatrical art. Special attention should be paid to the various periodical Almanacs (Almanach, Almanacco, Annuario) issued at various times in connexion with particular towns and theatres. Among modern journals *The Mask*, *The Theatre Arts Monthly*, and the *Rivista teatrale italiana* are all of importance, for reproductions as well as for articles dealing with ancient and modern theatres. Note should be taken likewise of occasional studies in journals such as *The Architectural Review*. Recently a series of most suggestive articles from the pen of Corrado Ricci, covering scenic art from classic to contemporary times, appeared in *Il Secolo* (1926, March 24, 26, April [illegible], and May [illegible]). The volumes of the *Theatergeschichtliche Forschungen* (from 1891) contain matter of considerable interest, and attention should be paid to the publications of the *Gesellschaft für Theatergeschichte*. The *Archiv für Theatergeschichte* (1904–5) was continued in the *Kleine Schriften* of that society. The *Bulletin* (1902–3) of the *Société de l'histoire du théâtre* likewise includes articles of value ; special attention may be drawn to the reproductions from and comment on the " Terence des Ducs " (No. 1, January 1902), by Henry Martin, and to Charles Malherbe's study of *Les Costumes et Décors d'Armide*, ' *L'Armide*,' *de Lulli* (No. 2, April 1902).

While no attempt has been made in the text of this volume to deal with the Oriental theatres, the student may be referred to various monographs on the Chinese, Japanese, and Indian stages. J.-J. Ampère has a study *Du Théâtre chinois* in the *Revue des deux Mondes* (September 15, 1838) ; this is of less value than *Les Chinois peints par eux-mêmes : le théâtre des Chinois* (1886) by Tcheng-Ki-Tong. The standard work on the subject is A. E. Zucker's *The Chinese Theatre* (1925). B. S. Allen's *Chinese Theatres Handbook* (1925) may also be referred to. On the popular theatre of Japan Zoë Kincaid's *Zabuki* (1925) is invaluable, and E. F. Fenollosa and E. L. Pound have a work on ' *Noh* ' *or Accomplishment : A Study of the Classical Stage of Japan* (1917). S. Lévi's *Le Théâtre indien* (1890) and Émile Senart's article on the same subject in the *Revue des deux Mondes* (May 1, 1891) are both of interest. Other Oriental countries are touched on in *La Danse au théâtre* (1924) by André Levinson and in *The Dramas and Dramatic Dances of Non-European Races* (1915) by W. Ridgeway.

(ii) The Greek Theatre

Most of our knowledge of Greek theatres and methods of staging is due to German industry and research, but A. E. Haigh's *The Attic Theatre* (3rd edition revised by A. W. Pickard-Cambridge, 1907) is an invaluable textbook for students who cannot read German, and may well be supplemented by R. C. Flickinger's *The Greek Theater and its Drama* (1918), and by Octave Navarre's *Le Théâtre grec* (1925). The first contains an excellent summary of theatre structure and of theatrical conditions ; the latter is especially valuable for its succinct expression of the main results of modern research. In addition to these books, there are, of course, important articles on various detailed points in such periodicals as *The American Journal of Archaeology*, *Studies in Classical Philology*, and *The Hellenic Journal*.

The German contribution to this subject can be outlined but briefly. The centre of recent discussion is *Das griechische Theater* (1896) by W. Dörpfeld and E. Reisch, in which it is argued that the ancient classical theatre was innocent of a raised stage. Previous to the appearance of this work, and not entirely out of date, may be mentioned the great compilation of Albert Müller, *Lehrbuch der griechischen Bühnenalterthümer* (1886), G. C. W. Schneider's *Das attische Theaterwesen* (1835), E. Bodensteiner's *Scenische Fragen im griechischen Drama* (1893), E. J. A. Bethe's *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Theaters im Alterthum* (1896), and Weismann's *Die scenische Aufführung der griechischen Dramen* (1893). The various views, theories, and controversies will be found in a variety of books, German, French, and English, among which the most important are O. Puchstein's *Die griechische Bühne* (1901), Fiechter's *Die baugeschichtliche Entwicklung des antiken Theaters* (1914), E. Bodensteiner's *Das antike Theater* (1902), the work on the same subject by G. Öhmichen, E. Petersen's *Die attische Tragödie als Bild- und Bühnen-Kunst* (1915), *Skene tragike* (1915) by Noack, *Die altgriechische Bühne* (1917) by Frickenhaus, and *The Greek Theatre of the Fifth Century before Christ* (1919) by J. T. Allen. There are, besides, many individual works and articles on separate theatres. Important notes have appeared in *Athenische Mittheilungen*, *Jahrbuch des archäologischen Instituts*, *Hermes* and *Philologus*, and the following volumes contain detailed studies of individual playhouses : E. A. Gardner and others, *Excavations at Megalopolis* (1892), F. Versakis' *Das Scenengebäude des Dionysos-Theaters* (at Athens) (*Kaiserlich deutsches archäologisches Institut : Jahrbuch*, vol. xxiv, Berlin, 1910), A. von Gerkan's *Das Theater von Priene* (1921), K. Dumon's *Le Théâtre de Polyclète* (1889), Defrasse and Lechat's *Épidaure* (1895), G.-E. Rizzo's *Il Teatro greco di Siracusa* (1923), and *Das Theater in Ephesos* (1912), by G. Niemann, R. Heberdey, and W. Wilberg.

Vitruvius' work on architecture (*De Architectura*) was first published in 1486, and was frequently reprinted in Italy during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In 1521 appeared an Italian version, in 1547 a German and a French, in 1602 a Spanish, while in 1692 was issued an English abridgment of the famous later French translation by Claude Perrault (1673). For English readers *The Ten Books of Architecture* (1914), rendered by H. H. Martin, is unquestionably the best edition. The study by E. Capps, *Vitruvius and the Greek Stage* (1893), might be consulted. The *Onomastikon* of Pollux, a typical late Greek encyclopaedia, was first printed at Venice in 1502, and was reprinted several times during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The best modern edition is that of Bethe. The Greek text is almost untranslatable, but the Greek-Latin edition published at Amsterdam in 1706 (*Julii Pollucis Onomastikon Graece et Latine*) may be found useful.

Most of the works on the Greek theatre cited above contain plans and illustrations, and many of these, with new material and valuable commentary, are included in the magnificent work of Dr Margarete Bieber, *Die Denkmäler zum Theaterwesen im Altertum* (1920). Additional pictorial evidence will be found in Baumeister's *Denkmäler des klassischen Alterthums* (1888), and in Wieseler's *Theatergebäude und Denkmäler des Bühnenwesens bei den Griechen und Römern* (1851).

The best study of stage masks (confined, however, to the realm of comedy) is Carl Robert's *Die Masken der neueren attischen Komödie* (1911), which contains many illustrations and a full discussion of the categories of Pollux. To this might be added a series of essays and articles, including Dierk's *Über das Costüm der grotesken Komiker in der alten Komödie* (*Archäol. Zeitung*, xliii), Hense's *Die Modificirung der Maske in der griechischen Tragödie* (1905), and C. A. Bottiger's *Die Furienmaske* (1801). The illustrations in the MSS of Terence are dealt with by Engelhardt in *Die Illustrationen der Terenzhandschriften* (1905). On the chorus see J. Pickard's *Der Standort der Schauspieler und des Chors im griechischen Theater des 5ten Jahrhunderts* (1892). Weil's *Études sur le drame antique* (1896) has notes on the act division in ancient drama.

Fuller bibliographies will, as was noted above, be found in the separate works mentioned, and this list by no means exhausts the books and monographs which will be found of value by the student.

(iii) The Hellenistic and Roman Theatres

Most of the works which deal with the classical Greek stage treat also, directly or indirectly, of the Hellenistic and the Roman. To those mentioned may be added G. Korting's *Geschichte des griechischen und römischen Theaters* (1897), R. Opitz' *Schauspiel und Teaterwesen der Griechen und Römer* (1889), C. C. Saint Saens' *Note sur les décors de théâtre dans l'antiquité romaine* (1886), and B. Varneke's Очерки изъ исторіи древне-римскаго театра (1903). Mau's *Pompeii* (1907) has a section on the theatres, and Piranesi's *Teatro di Ercolano* (1783), although early, will be found useful. A. L. T. Vaudoyer has a *Description du théâtre de Marcellus à Rome* (1812); Gsell's *Monuments antiques de l'Algérie* (1901) surveys the stage relics in North Africa; while A. N. Caristie's *Monuments antiques à Orange* (1856) and the *Conférence sur le théâtre antique d'Orange faite devant le Congrès de la Société française d'archéologie* (1885) deal with the famous Gallic theatre. Performances there are described by Fernand-Michel in *Le Théâtre antique d'Orange et ses représentations modernes* (1894), and by T. A. Janvier in *The Christmas Kalends of Provence* (1902). Literature on the Terence MSS has been cited above; there may also be added *Costume in Roman Comedy* (1909) by Catherine Saunders.

On the Phlyakes there are some important notices in the *Jahrbuch des Kaiserlich deutschen archäologischen Instituts* for 1886 and 1893, while there is a little library of articles and essays on the *Fabula Atellana*. Martin Schanz in his *Geschichte der Römischen Litteratur* (1909) provides a useful summary and quotes most of the important references to this type of entertainment. The stock characters are discussed by K. Sittl in *I Personaggi dell' Atellana* (*Rivista di storia antica*, 1895, i, 3) and by F. Graziani in a study of the same title (*Rivista di Filologia*, 1896, xxiv). Fragments of the Atellan farce appear in O. Ribbeck's *Comicorum Romanorum fragmenta* (1898), and there are some special studies such as D. A. H. van Eck's *Quaestiones scenicae Romanae* (1892), R. Maffei's *Le Favole Atellane* (1892), and E. Munk's *De Fabulis Atellanis* (1840). E. Bethe deals with the subject in his above-cited *Prolegomena* (1896).

(iv) The Medieval Theatre

Unquestionably the most important work on the traditions of the Roman and Greek mimes is Hermann Reich's *Der Mimus: Ein litterar-entwickelungsgeschichtlicher Versuch* (1903), although a few studies, such as C. J. Grysar's *Der römische Mimus* (*Wiener Akademie der Wissenschaften*, philos. histor. Klasse, 1854, xii, ii, 237–337), Tuhr's *De Mimis Graecorum* (1860), C. Magnin's *Les Origines du théâtre moderne* (vol. i only published, 1838), A. Dieterich's *Pulcinella* (1897), Édélestand Du Méril's *Origines latines du théâtre moderne* (1849) and M. Scherillo's *Die Atellane und das heutige Volkslustspiel Neapels* (*Das Ausland*, 1884), had all discussed or made some approaches toward his final conclusions. To these might be added, as containing matter of interest, the *De ludis scenicis mimorum et pantomimorum* (1713) of N. Calliachius, *Über die Pantomimen der Römer* (*Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*, 1834, ii) by C. J. Grysar, O. Driesen's important monograph, *Der Ursprung des Harlekin* (1904), and P. S. Allen's *The Mediaeval Mimus* (*Modern Philology*, vii, January and July 1910). F. Ficoroni in his *Dissertatio de larvis scenicis et figuris comicis antiquorum Romanorum* (1754) presents a series of engravings from Roman terra cottas and gems, with commentary. A number of frescoes in the church of St Sophia at Kiev are reproduced and discussed by N. P. Kondakov in an article О фрескахъ лѣстницъ Кіево-Софійскаго собора (Записки императорскаго русскаго археологическаго общества, New Series, iii, 287–306). Most of the references to the medieval mime and to the decisions of Church councils are given in Reich and D'Ancona (see below), but the student could turn to original sources such as J. Hartzheim's *Concilia Germaniae* (1759–90), J. Douhet's *Dictionnaire des Mystères*, J. P. Migne's *Patrologiae cursus completus* and J. D. Mansi's *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova . . . Collectio* (1769–92).

To outline even the most important works on the medieval pageants and performers is well-nigh impossible, for almost every introduction to the text of a medieval play contains some matter of interest. The standard English work on the subject is Sir Edmund Chambers' *The Medieval Stage* (1903), which includes a fairly full bibliography to the date of publication. Not much space, however, is devoted in this work to pageants and methods of production, and it must be supplemented by many independent studies. W. Creizenach's *Geschichte des neueren Dramas* (1893–1907) is a famous work which gives full attention to methods of presentation.

Much study has been devoted to this subject in France. The works of the Parfaict *frères* are now largely out of date, but still contain some points of value. More important for our purpose are the various books by Petit de Julleville: *Les Mystères* (1880), *La Comédie et les mœurs en France au moyen âge* (1886), *Les Comédiens en France au moyen âge* (1889; a valuable summary of the performers in French medieval dramas), and *Répertoire du théâtre comique en France au moyen âge* (1886; a survey of extant comic works with notes on performances). É. du Méril's *Histoire de la comédie: Période primitive* (1864) is important, as is M. Septet's *Le Drame chrétien au moyen âge* (1878). All these have references to methods of performance. É. du Méril's *Origines latines du théâtre moderne* (1849) and C. Magnin's *Les Origines du théâtre moderne* (1838) have less interest theatrically, but are of considerable general value. Other specialized information will be found in the *Dictionnaire des mystères* (1854), by Jules, Comte de Douhet, *Les Prophètes du Christ* (1878), by M. Septet, *Drames liturgiques du moyen âge* (1861), by E. de Coussemaker, *Drames liturgiques de la Cathédrale de Rouen* (*Annales de la Faculté des Lettres de Caen*, 1888), by A. Gasté, *Mystères inédits du xv^e siècle* (1837), by M. L. A. Jubinal, *Études sur les mystères* (1837), by O. Le Roy, *Essai sur la mise-en-scène depuis les mystères jusqu'au Cid* (1836), by É. Morice. Most valuable of all, however, is the detailed study by G. Cohen on the *Histoire de la mise-en-scène dans le théâtre religieux français du moyen âge* (1907). This may be supplemented with A. Veselovski's Старинній театръ въ Европе (1870), and M. Paushkin's Средневековій театръ (1914), both careful studies of medieval theatrical enterprise. Émile Male's *L'Art religieux* has been referred to in the text.

Considerable attention has been paid to the subject both in Germany and in Italy. F. J. Mone's *Schauspiele des Mittelalters* (1846) is an important early work. Among a multitude of others C. Lange's *Die lateinischen Osterfeiern* (1887), G. Milchsack's *Die Oster- und Passionsspiele* (1879), and A. H. Alt's *Theater und Kirche in ihrem gegenseitigen Verhältniss* (1846) may be mentioned. R. Froning's *Das Drama des Mittelalters* (1891) contains interesting texts and commentary, while Leibing has a valuable account of a Lucerne play in *Die Inscenierung des zweitägigen Luzernes Osterspiels* (1869). The standard Italian work is *Origini del teatro italiano* (1891) by Alessandro D'Ancona. This includes most of the material presented in such monographs as Lumini's *Il Drama nelle sacre rappresentazioni dei secoli XIV, XV, e XVI* (1875), Ignazio Ciampi's *Le Rappresentazioni sacre nella parte comica* (1865), and Emiliani Giudici's *Storia del teatro italiano* (1869). Consultation might be made of Mazzatini's article on *I Disciplinati di Gubbio e i loro Uffizj drammatici* (*Giorn. di Filol. Romanza*, iii, 85), and Monaci's *Uffizj drammatici dei disciplinati dell' Umbria* (*Rivista di Filologia Romanza*, i, 256).

Articles and essays abound on various aspects of this subject, and the indexes of *Notes and Queries*, *The Modern Language Review*, *Modern Philology*, *Anglia*, *Englische Studien*, and similar periodicals may be referred to. Among miscellaneous studies G. R. Coffman's *A New Approach to Medieval Latin Drama* (*Mod. Phil.*, 1925, xxii, 3), and the same author's *A Note concerning the Cult of St Nicholas at Hildesheim* (Manley Anniversary Studies, 1922) should be mentioned. J. J. Jusserand's *English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages* (1892) presents the social background with vividness, and marionettes are well dealt with by C. Magnin in *Histoire des marionettes en Europe depuis l'antiquité jusqu'à nos jours* (1862), and by H. S. Rehm in *Das Buch der Marionetten: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Theaters aller Völker* (1905).

Special studies on national theatres contain matter of general interest. The early Russian stage is discussed in P. O. Morozov's magnificent compilation, Исторія драматической литературы и театра (1903), and in Очеркъ исторій театра в Западной Европе и Россіи (1911). P. de Corvin has also a study on *Le Théâtre en Russie depuis ses origines jusqu'à nos jours* (1890). The fortunes of the Spanish theatre are traced in E. Catarelo y Mori's *Estudios sobre la historia del arte escénico en España* (1896–97), J. Yxart's *El Arte escénico en España* (1894–96), H. A. Rennert's *The Spanish Stage in the Time of Lope de Vega* (1909), and A. F. von Schack's *Geschichte der dramatischen Litteratur und Kunst in Spanien* (1854). The stage of the Netherlands is well treated in E. Vander Straeten's *Le Théâtre villageois en Flandre* (1881), in F. Heller von Hellwald's *Geschichte des holländischen Theaters* (1874), and in H. J. E. Endepols' *Het decoratief en de opvoering van het middelnederlandsche Drama volgens de middelnederlandsche tooneelstukken* (1903). Reference may also be made to another general study, K. Nyrop's *En Theater forestillung i Middelalderen* (in *Studier fra Sprog- og Oldtidsforskning*, 1892).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(v) Early Renascence Theatres

Full details concerning some of the earlier efforts are to be found in D'Ancona, *op. cit.*, and Ferrari gives a good summary of performances and of *mise en scène*. The woodcuts in the editions of Terence are noted in M. Herrmann's *Forschungen zur deutschen Teatergeschichte des Mittelalters und der Renaissance* (1914). E. Flechsig has a special study of *Die Dekoration der modernen Bühne in Italien* (1894). Lily B. Campbell's *Scenes and Machines on the Renaissance* (1923) is an interesting study of classical origins and one of the best books on the subject. The relevant portions of S. Serlio's *Architettura* (1551) are reprinted in Sir Edmund Chambers' *The Elizabethan Stage* (1923). The discussion of theatrical methods is given in Book II, which appeared in English as *The second Booke of Architecture* (1611). N. Sabbatini's *Pratica di fabricar scene, e machine ne' teatri* (1638) is summarized in Ferrari's monograph. With these works should be taken into account a number of contemporary essays on (1) theatre practice, and (2) the rules of perspective. A. Ingegneri's *Della poesia rappresentativa e del modo di rappresentare le favole sceniche* (1598) is of special importance, as is the earlier MS. *Dialoghi in materia di rappresentazione scenica* by L. de' Sommi, of which a few selections are given in Appendix B. A select list of books on perspective is given by Ferrari (pp. 275–76), dating from 1504 to 1827. Among and in addition to these there may be signalized Scipione Chiaramonti's *Delle scene e teatri* (1675), Giulio Troili's *Paradossi per pratticare la prospettiva senza saperla* (1683), and L. Sirigatti's *La Pratica di prospettiva* (1596). *Del Teatro Olympico* (1733) by G. Montenari, *Il Teatro Olimpico* (1847) by A. Magrini, and *Il Forestiere istruito delle cose più rare di architettura e di alcune pittura della città di Vicenza* (1761) give accounts of the Palladian stage. A very important work on seventeenth-century theatrical activities is Angelo Solerti's *Musica, ballo e drammatica alla corte medicea dal 1600 al 1637* (1905), which gives, besides some valuable illustrations, an enlightening series of entries from a diary kept by Cesare Tinghi. C. H. Kaulfuss-Diesch's *Die Inscenierung des deutschen Dramas an der Wende des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts* (1905) and E. Schmidt's *Die Bühnenverhältnisse des deutschen Schuldramas im 16. Jahrhundert* (1903) both contain matter of value. Notes on early stage-lighting appear in an article by W. G. Lawrence in *The Stage Year Book* (1926).

(vi) The Commedia dell' Arte

The literature on the Italian improvised comedy is vast; a good bibliography is appended to the second edition (1926) of the exceedingly well-illustrated and entertainingly written study on *La Comédie italienne* by Pierre Louis Duchartre. This volume, however, may be supplemented by others. In addition to several works on the relationship between the classical and modern comedy, cited in Section III, there may be mentioned L. Stoppato's *La Commedia popolare in Italia* (1887), M. Scherillo's *La Commedia dell' arte in Italia* (1884), and N. Signorelli's *Storia critica dei teatri antichi e moderni* (1813). On the general history of the type C. Miclashevski's *La Commedia dell' arte* (1914; in Russian), and L. Rasi's *I Comici italiani* (1897–1905) are among the more valuable works, but these do not render obsolete some earlier books such as I. Ciampi's *Studio sulla commedia italiana nel secolo xvi* (1880), Maurice Sand's *Les Masques et bouffons de la comédie italienne* (1859), G. Cocchi's *Studio sulle maschere italiane* (1861), E. Ferretti's *Le Maschere italiane nella commedia dell' arte e nel teatro di Goldoni* (1904), and A. Agresti's *Studii sulla commedia italiana del secolo xvi* (1871). W. Smith has a study in English on *The Commedia dell' Arte* (1912). L. Riccoboni's *Histoire du théâtre italien* (1730) is an interesting early account, as is A. Perrucci's *Dell' Arte rappresentativa, premeditata, ed all' improvvisa* (1699). The story of the Gozzi-Goldoni controversy can be studied in the former's *Memoirs* (translated by J. A. Symonds, 1890), and in O. Marchini-Capasso's *Goldoni e la commedia dell' arte* (1912). There are various special monographs on individual types of the improvised comedy, of which the following may be singled out: on Arlecchino—Driessen, *op. cit.*, A. Graf's *Arlecchino* (*Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, 1888, xi), and C. Neppucci's *Arlecchino* (*Giornale di erudizione di Firenze*, 1898, vii); on Pulcinella—Dieterich, *op. cit.*, M. Scherillo's *The Genealogy of Pulcinella* (*The Mask*, iii), V. Fainelli's *Chi era Pulcinella?* (*Giorn. stor. d. lett. ital.*, 1910, lv), and B. Croce's *Pulcinella e il personaggio del napoletano in commedia* (1899); on the Captain—F. De Simone Brouwer's *Capitan Fracassa* (1900), U. Fleres' *Ancora del Capitan Fracassa* (1881), B. Croce's *La Spagna nella commedia* (*Atti dell' Acc. Pont.*, xxvii), and G. Senigaglia's *Capitan Spavento* (1899); on Scaramuccia—A. Constantini's *La Vie de Scaramouche* (1695); on Stenterello—G. Jarro's *L'Origine della maschera di Stenterello* (1898).

The iconography of the improvised theatre is large, the most important collections being those of J. Callot (*Balli di Sfessania*), C. Gillot (*Le Théâtre italien*), and F. Bertelli (*Il Carnevale italiano mascherato*). A. [illegible]'s *Compendio delle maschere italiane illustrate nei loro costumi* (1888) is also of interest.

Many *scenarii* have been collected. Flaminio Scala's *Il Teatro delle favole rappresentative* (1611) contains fifty of these, and others are given by A. Bartoli (*Scenari inediti*, 1880), E. Maddalena (*Uno Scenario inedito*, in *Sitzungsberichte der wiener K. Akad. der Wissenschaften*; phil. hist. Klasse, 1901, cxliii), P. Toldo (*Uno Scenario inedito*, in *Giorn. stor. d. lett.*

ital., 1905, xlvi), V. Rossi (*I Suppositi dell' Ariosto ridotto a scenario*, 1895), A. Neri (*Una Commedia dell' arte*, in *Giorn. stor. d. lett. ital.*, 1883, i), and G. Martucci (*Uno Scenario inedito*, in *Nuova Antologia*, May 15, 1885). G. de la Porta's *Delle Commedie* (1726) may also be consulted. Various specimens too remain in manuscript. The more important collections are those of B. Locatelli (MS Rome, Bibl. Casanatense, F. iv, 12–13, Cod. 1211–1212; see A. Valeri's *Gli Scenari inediti di Basilio Locatelli*, 1894), and of J. D. Biancolelli (MS Paris, Bibl. de l'Opéra, in a French translation of 1760), and the anonymous gatherings at Naples (Bibl. Nation.), Rome (Bibl. Corsini, Cod. 652. 45. G. 6; Cod. 976. 45. F. 1; and Bibl. Casanatense, 4. 302–4.386) and Venice (Museo Civico). Gherardi's French collection of the seventeenth century is well known, and may be read in many editions. L. Moland deals with the influence of this form on literature in *Molière et la comédie italienne* (1867). A posthumous work by Enzo Petraccone entitled *La Commedia dell' Arte: Storia, Tecnica, Scenari* (Naples, 1927) presents an unusually valuable series of historical texts and selected *scenarii*. It will undoubtedly form an important 'source-book' on the subject.

(vii) EARLY FRENCH THEATRES

The most important document in this section is H. C. Lancaster's *Mémoire de Mahelot* (1920), which presents the sketches made for the Hôtel de Bourgogne. The accompanying text is presented and discussed in E. Dacier's *La Mise-en-scène à Paris au xvii^{e} siècle* (*Mémoires de la Soc. de l'hist. de Paris*, 1901). In addition H. Prunières' *Le Ballet de cour en France avant Benserade et Lully* (1914), E. Rigal's *Le Théâtre français avant la période classique* (1901), E. Despois' *Le Théâtre français sous Louis XIV* (1874), E. Rigal's *La Mise-en-scène dans les tragédies du xvi^{e} siècle* (*Revue d'hist. litt. de la France*, 1905, xii, i), J. Haraszti's *La Comédie française de la renaissance et la scène* (*Revue d'hist. litt. de la France*, 1909, xvi), Ludovic Celler's *Les Décors, les costumes et la mise-en-scène au xvii^{e} siècle* (1869), and G. Despierres' *Le Théâtre et les comédiens à Alençon au seizième et au dix-septième siècle* (1892) are all of considerable value for the student. The question of the influence of Italian comic practice has been discussed in a variety of volumes among which G. Apollinaire's *Le Théâtre italien, avec une étude sur le théâtre italien en France* (1910), O. Klingler's *Die Comédie italienne in Paris nach der Sammlung von Gherardi* (1902), and A. Baschet's *Les Comédiens italiens à la cour de France sous Charles IX, Henri III, Henri IV et Louis XIII* (1882) are the most valuable. A considerable number of more literary surveys, such as the *Histoire générale du théâtre en France* (in progress), by Eugène Lintilhac, deal also with the theatre, and there are special volumes on individual theatres, such as the *théâtres de la foire* (*cf.* M. Albert's *Les Théâtres de la foire* (1660–1789), 1900, and N. M. Bernardin's *La Comédie italienne en France et les théâtres de la foire et du boulevard* (1570–1791), 1902). J. L. A. Jullien surveys costume on the French stage in his *Histoire du costume au théâtre depuis les origines du théâtre en France jusqu'à nos jours* (1880).

(viii) ELIZABETHAN THEATRES

The earlier morality stage is dealt with in *The Medieval Stage* (1903) of Sir Edmund Chambers, whose *Elizabethan Stage* (1923) is an invaluable compilation of fact and theory relating to the later playhouses. This latter work includes the results of most of the earlier writers on this subject, such as Albright, Quincy Adams, Thorndike, Reynolds, and others. The survey, however, ends with the year 1616, and other authorities must be used for the later decades. On the history of the theatres and companies J. Quincy Adams' *Shakespearean Playhouses* (1917) is the best authority, and the fullest study of staging is that by A. H. Thorndike (1916). This may be compared with G. F. Reynolds' *Some Principles of Elizabethan Staging* (*Mod. Phil.*, 1905, i and ii), and R. Crompton Rhodes' *The Stagery of Shakespeare* (1922). W. J. Lawrence's *Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (1912 and 1913) as well as his articles, *New Light on the Elizabethan Theatre* (*Fortnightly Review*, May 1916) and *Night Performances in the Elizabethan Theatres* (*Englische Studien*, 1915, xlviii), contain many facts and suggestive theories. G. F. Reynolds, in addition to his general study, has an article on *What we know of the Elizabethan Stage* (*Modern Philology*, 1911, ix) which surveys the materials at the command of the student.

The Revels Office documents have been collected in two series by A. Feuillerat (1908–14), while Henslowe's *Diary* has found an excellent editor in W. W. Greg. Many documents relating to the theatres of the time are reprinted in the Malone Society *Collections*, and others have been given in the publications of the New Shakspere Society. The *Records of Sir Henry Herbert* have been edited by J. Q. Adams (1920), while E. Hyder Rollins has collected. some new facts in *A Contribution to the History of the English Commonwealth Drama* (*Studies in Philology*, 1921, xviii). It must be added that references to the stage appear in almost all the literary histories enumerated in the Elizabethan section of *British Drama*.

On the masks R. Brotanek's *Die englischen Maskenspiele* (1902) and Paul Reyher's brilliant study of *Les Masques anglais* (1909) are standard authorities. The Malone and Walpole Societies in 1924 issued a monumental illustrated catalogue of Inigo Jones' masque designs, and there are several articles on his work and on that of his assistant, John

Webb, among which may be mentioned: H. Bell's *Contributions to the History of the English Playhouse* (Arch. Record, 1913), and W. G. Keith's *The Designs for the First Movable Scenery on the English Stage* (Burlington Magazine, 1914, xxv), *A Theatre Project of Inigo Jones* (*Burl. Mag.*, 1917, xxxi), and *John Webb and the Court Theatre of Charles II* (Arch. Review, 1925, lvii).

(It must be noted that no mention is made in this section of books or articles which deal exclusively with the Elizabethan theatre before 1616, as these are all chronicled in Sir Edmund Chambers' *The Elizabethan Stage*.)

(ix) Continental Theatres of the Eighteenth Century

Ferrari's account of the eighteenth-century Italian theatre artists is particularly full, and he has included important reference lists of the scenographers of different schools. Corrado Ricci has issued a beautiful collection of Bibiena designs (1915), Paul Zucker's *Theater-Dekoration des Klassizismus* and *Theater-Dekoration des Barock* (1925) contain representative designs, while both J. Gregor's *Wiener szenische Kunst* (1924) and the vast *Monumenta Scenica* (1925, in progress) devote considerable space to the eighteenth century. Andrea Pozzo's *Prospettiva de' pittori e architetti* (1692–1700) presents a variety of stage designs, as do Ferdinando da Bibiena's *Direzioni della prospettiva teorica* (1732) and his *Disegni delle scene* (1714). Giuseppe Bibiena has his *Architetture e prospettive* (1740), many plates in which were reproduced in *Theatre-Dekorationen* (1888). *Opere varie di architettura e prospettiva* of G. B. Piranesi was issued in 1750. There are many collections of engravings by other and later artists. The importance of [illegible] engravings (1735) is called attention to by Hugh Quigley in *Notes and Queries*. Some attention is devoted to scenery and costume in M. Aghion's *Le théatre à Paris au xviii^e siècle* (1925).

On the theatres of this time there are numerous general and specialized works. P. Patte's *Essai sur l'architecture théâtrale* (1782) contains interesting plans. Plans of the various theatres at Rome are included in the *Descrizione istorica del Teatro Tor di Nona* (1795). Information on the structure of these houses will be found in the *Traité de la construction des théâtres* (1886), by A. Gosset, *Architectonographie des théâtres, ou, parallèle historique et critique de ces édifices considérés sous le rapport de l'architecture et de la décoration* (1837), by A. Donnet, *Parallèle des principaux théâtres modernes* (1870), by J. de Filippi, and *Storia e descrizione de' principali theatri antichi e moderni* (1830), by G. Ferrario. Corrado Ricci has an important study on *I Teatri di Bologna* (1888), Benedetto Croce another on *I Teatri di Napoli* (1891), and M. Scherillo has written on the *Storia letteraria dell' opera buffa napolitana* (1883), with notes on the popular playhouses. For the Teatro alla Scala at Milan see G. Piermarini's *Teatro della Scala in Milano* (1826), and for the San Carlino at Naples see S. di Giacomo's *Cronaca del teatro San Carlino* (1895). On the German theatres Petersen's *Schiller und die Bühne* (1904), Eduard Devrient's *Geschichte der deutschen Schauspielkunst* (1848), and M. Hammitzsch's *Der moderne Theaterbau* (1906) may be consulted. Information on stage machinery will be found in E. M. Laumann's *La Machinerie au théâtre depuis les Grecs jusqu'à nos jours* (1897). The older methods may be compared and contrasted with those described in G. Moynet's *La Machinerie théâtrale : trucs et décors* (1893), A. de Vaulabelle's *La Science au théâtre* (1908), and J. Lefèvre's *L'Électricité au théâtre* (1894).

(x) Restoration Theatres

Various documents and a brief survey of Restoration stage conditions will be found in the present writer's *History of Restoration Drama* (1923). R. W. Lowe presents a picture of a playhouse in his *Thomas Betterton* (1891), while L. B. Campbell deals with the period generally in her above-cited *Scenes and Machines*. The theatre chapters in G. C. D. Odell's *Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving* (1924) are important and cover theatrical history from then to the present time. There are many contemporary sources of information, the chief being John Downes' *Roscius Anglicanus* (1708), and Colley Cibber's *Apology* (1740). The latter should be read in R. W. Lowe's excellent reprint. Various details are discussed by W. J. Lawrence (*op. cit.*), W. G. Keith, and Montague Summers (see particularly Summers' introductions to various reprints).

(xi) The Eighteenth-Century Theatres

For the eighteenth century R. Farquharson Sharp's *A Short History of the English Stage* (1909) is particularly full. The various works by J. Doran and P. Fitzgerald are interesting, but not always accurate. Documents and sketches of playhouse conditions are presented in the present writer's *History of Early Eighteenth Century Drama* (1925) and *History of Late Eighteenth Century Drama* (1927). A. Thaler's *From Shakespeare to Sheridan* (1922) contains interesting commentary on stage practice but little on theatre settings. The main contemporary works on the theatre are enumerated in R. W. Lowe's *Theatrical Literature* (1888). Valuable collections of playbills and press-cuttings are preserved in the British Museum (especially the Burney collection) and in the Victoria and Albert Museum. An interesting survey of histrionic costume from 1660 to 1824 is contributed by L. B. Campbell to the *University of Wisconsin Studies* (1918, ii), while W. J. Lawrence has two essays on William Capon and P. J. de Loutherbourg in *The Magazine of Art* (xviii).

(xii) THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER

The nineteenth century teems with works on the theatre and with actors' memoirs. Many illustrated papers and playhouse 'souvenirs' contain examples of theatre design. The original sketches for Kean's performances are preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Hardly any single works can be mentioned here, but Errol Sherson's *London's Lost Theatres* (1926) and Watson's *Sheridan to Robertson* (1926) are excellent playhouse guides. Descriptions of the early theatres will be found in *The Covent-Garden Journal* (1810) and in Gilliland's *Dramatic Mirror* (1808).

The modern theatre has seen considerable treatment. Adolphe Appia's *La Mise-en-scène du drame wagnérien* (1895) and *Die Musik und die Inscenierung* (1899) suggest the lines taken by that great innovator, while Gordon Craig's *On the Art of the Theatre* (1911), *Towards a New Theatre* (1912), *The Theatre Advancing* (1921), and *Scene* (1923) all present examples of that artist's work. A. M. S. Rocca's article on Craig's work in *Comoedia* (1924) is an interesting study. H. K. Moderwell's *The Theatre of To-day* (1914), C. Van Vechten's *Stage Decoration as a Fine Art* (in *Music after the Great War and other Studies*, 1915), K. Macgowan's *Continental Stagecraft* (1922) and *The Theatre of To-morrow* (1921) present the main pre-War tendencies. The later movements have not been fully 'written up' as yet, but examples of the newer work have appeared in *The Theatre Arts Monthly*, while Alexander Bakshy (1916), Huntly Carter (1924), and Leo Wiener (1924) have dealt with post-War Russian scenography. The work of the Moscow Art Theatre has been much discussed: Stanislavski's *My Life in Art* (English translation, 1926) is the most important document concerning the great *régisseur's* methods, but Oliver M. Sayler's *Inside the Moscow Art Theatre* (1925) might also be consulted. A monumental and fully illustrated historical record, Московский Художественный театр *1898–1923*, was prepared by Nicolai Efros in 1924. A similar record of the Moscow Grand Theatre was published in 1925 (Московский Большой Театр *1825–1925*), and there is an interesting monograph on modern Russian film-work (which is there intimately connected with the theatre) entitled Кино (1925). Alexander Bakshy's *The Path of the Modern Russian Stage* (1916) deals suggestively with the earlier movements. Oliver M. Sayler's *Max Reinhardt and his Theatre* (1924) is a magnificently illustrated account of German endeavour, and other tendencies there are well dealt with by Oscar Fischel in *Das moderne Bühnenbild* (1918). Among Italian works there may be mentioned A. G. Bragaglia's *Del teatro teatrale* (1926) and *La Maschera mobile* (1926), C. Pavolini's *Arte teatrale* (*Le Arti plastiche*, 1925), E. Prampolini's note on modernist aims in *Rivista d'Arte Futurista* (1924), and P. Gori's *Scenografia* (1927). Sheldon Cheney's *The New Movement in the Theater* (1914), *The Art Theater* (1917), and *The Open-air Theater* (1918) treat mainly of American endeavour. Irving Pichel's *Modern Theatres* (new ed., 1925) should also be consulted. In addition to these there are some more general works, such as Huntly Carter's *The New Spirit in Drama and Art* (1913), H. B. Sell's *What is it all about?* (1914), and Albert Rutherston's *Decoration in the Theatre* (1919).

(xiii) SOME BOOKS ON SPECIAL THEATRES

It may be worth while to add a note on some books which deal with particular theatres or theatrical endeavour apart from chronological divisions.

(a) *England.* Farquharson Sharp's essay on the English stage has already been mentioned; H. B. Baker's *The London Stage* (1889) is less satisfactory. H. Saxe-Wyndham's *The Annals of Covent Garden* (1906) traces the fortunes of one of the two patent houses, L. Bayliss does the same for *The Old Vic* (1925), and Nigel Playfair for *The Lyric, Hammersmith* (1925).

(b) *France.* There are many general works on the French theatres, among which J. Moynet's *L'Envers du théâtre, machines et décorations* (1873), Adolphe Jullien's *Les Spectateurs sur le théâtre* (1875), C. A. Mendès' *L'Art au théâtre* (1897–1900), A. Muriel's *Le Théâtre aujourd'hui* (1855), and A. Zola's *Le Naturalisme au théâtre* (1881) are of special interest. J. É. V. Arago in *Foyers et coulisses* (1852) and *Physiologie des foyers de tous les théâtres de Paris* (1841) has some notes of value. Many books have been devoted to the Comédie-française; the following will be found useful: J. Bonnassies' *La Comédie-française: histoire administrative* (1874), C. G. Étienne and A. L. D. Martainville's *Histoire du Théâtre-français* (1802), A. Houssaye's *La Comédie-française, 1680–1880* (1880), A. Joannidès' *La Comédie-française, 1901–14* (1902–15), F. and C. Parfaict's *Histoire du Théâtre-françois* (1745–49). An equally extensive library is devoted to the Opéra. F. H. J. Blaze traces the history of *L'Académie impériale de musique* (1855). N. Desarbres has an essay on *Deux Siècles à l'Opéra, 1669–1868* (1868); the history of the theatre may be traced in the *Histoire du théâtre de l'Opéra* (1753), by L. Travenol and J. B. Durey de Noinville, and in the *Histoire de l'Opéra* (1875) by A. Royer. There is an interesting *Album de l'Opéra* (published *c.* 1855) showing the "principales scènes des meilleurs ouvrages" presented there, and A. Guillaumot has a set of *Costumes des ballets du roi* (1885) with twenty colour-plates of eighteenth-century designs. P. D. Parfouru and G. H. M. Monval have a work on *L'Odéon: histoire administrative, anecdotique et littéraire* (1876–82). L. O. A. Heulhard's *Jean Monnet* (1884) is an interesting study of eighteenth-century theatrical endeavour, and valuable plates are given in J. Huret's *Le Théâtre national de l'opéra comique* (1898). *Le Théâtre libre illustré* (1890), by R. Darzens, with sketches by Lucien Métivet, and A. Thalasso's *Le Théâtre libre* (1909) preserve records of the famous nineteenth-century effort, while in 1917 there appeared *A New French Theatre in America: Théâtre du vieux Colombier*, giving a succinct account of Copeau's work.

(c) *Germany.* The earlier stage history has little but dramatic interest, and may be traced in the many works on the Englische Komödianten. M. Martersteig's *Das deutsche Theater im neunzehnten Jahrhundert* (1904), F. J. von Reden-Esbeck's *Caroline Neuber und ihre Zeitgenossen* (1881), J. C. Stümcke's *Die deutsche Theaterausstellung* (1910), and F. H. O. Weddigen's *Geschichte der Theater Deutschlands* (1906) all deal with general stage development and present important illustrations. *Die Theater in Berlin* (1886) gives seven plans, and L. Heim and G. Bass' *Das Königliche Opernhaus für Berlin* (1910), and H. C. G. Schliepmann's *Die neuen Entwürfe zum Berliner Königlichen Opernhaus* (1913) both contain illustrations. O. A. Banck in *Aus der deutschen Bühnenwelt* (1865) deals with Dresden, and plans are provided in G. Semper's *Das Königliche Hoftheater zu Dresden* (1849). O. J. Bierbaum writes of *Fünf und zwanzig Jahre Münchner Hoftheatergeschichte* (1892); E. Giesenberg has a monograph on *Das Opernhaus zu Frankfurt a. M.* (1883), while A. H. E. von Oven deals with an earlier period in *Das erste städtische Theater zu Frankfurt a. M.* (1872). C. F. Langhans has a work on *Das Stadt-Theater in Leipzig* (1870). Wagner's experiments are dealt with in the *Handbuch der Architektur* (1885). Friedrich Michael's *Deutsches Theater* (1923) is a very useful cheap survey, which may be supplemented by Julius Petersen's *Das deutsche Nationaltheater* (1919).

(d) *Austria.* The stage in Vienna is dealt with in a number of volumes: A. W. von Weilen's *Geschichte des Wiener Theaterwesens von den ältesten Zeiten bis zu den Anfängen der Hof-Theater* (1899), and F. L. von Holbein's *Deutsches Bühnenwesen* (1853) are among the more important. Later efforts are treated of by H. Bahr in his *Wiener Theater, 1892–98* (1899), and in *Die Theater Wiens* (1893–1909), issued periodically by the *Gesellschaft für vervielfältigende Kunst.* The Kaiserlich-königliches-Hofburgtheater is dealt with by J. Bayer (1894), while J. E. Schlager has a monograph on the old playhouse in the *Wiener kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften*, phil.-hist. Klasse, 1851, vi. R. Lothar's *Das Wiener Burgtheater* (1899), and E. van der Nüll and A. von S. von Siccardsburg's *Das Kaiserlich-königliche Hof-Opernhaus in Wien* (1885), give many illustrations of other Viennese playhouses.

(e) *Russia.* To the special studies mentioned above may be added an interesting essay by N. D. Bernstein, *Russlands Theater und Musik zur Zeit Peters des Grossen* (1903) and P. de Corvin's general survey, *Le Théâtre en Russie depuis ses origines jusqu'à nos jours* (1890).

(f) *Switzerland.* Bächtold's *Schweizerische Schauspiele des 16. Jahrhunderts* (1890–93) and A. Beetschen's *Das Theaterwesen in der Schweiz* (1897) give an account of the Swiss theatres.

(g) *United States of America.* Much research has been devoted to the history of the American stage, but there is little until modern times that calls for attention here. T. A. Brown's *A History of the New York Stage from the First Performance in 1732 to 1901* (1903) provides a general survey of theatrical events in New York City. G. O. Seilhamer covers the whole of the United States in his *History of the American Theatre* (1888–91). In 1870 J. H. McBride collected an interesting set of *Diagrams of the Leading New York Theatres*. Many plans and settings of modern date are presented in *The Theatre Arts Monthly.*

(h) *Arabia, Turkey, etc.* Besides the books on the Chinese, Japanese, and Indian theatres mentioned above, there are several which deal with other Eastern countries. These are of value for purposes of comparison. P. E. Kahle has an essay *Zur Geschichte des arabischen Schattentheaters in Egypten* (1909). A. Thalasso's *Molière en Turquie: étude sur le théâtre de Karagueuz* (1888) has interest for the mime tradition, and there is much that is suggestive in *Das türkische Volksschauspiel Orta ojunu* (1908).

(xiv) MISCELLANEOUS

(a) *Costume.* A few works on theatrical costume have been cited above. Most of the books of this type deal more with civil and military than with stage dress, but the following contain matter of interest: the costume plates published under the direction of M. Trentsensky in London in the fifties of the nineteenth century, the collection of stage costumes designed by A. Garnerey and H. Lecomte published in the early nineteenth century in Paris, the costume plates in *La Scène* (1877–81), Lacy's collection of costume plates (1865 and 1868), and *Costumes of the Modern Stage* (1880–90). E. Aria's *Costume: Fanciful, Historical, and Theatrical* (1906), Böhm's *Das Bühnenkostüm* (1920), and O. Bie's *Das Theater: Bühnenbilder und Kostüme von Karl Walser* (1912), show interesting modern plates. Designs for costumes naturally appear in many of the works on the modern theatres (*cf.* Oliver M. Sayler's *Max Reinhardt* and the various works on the Moscow Art Theatre), many of Inigo Jones' designs are given in the Catalogue cited above, and the *Monumenta Scenica* devotes several plates to this subject. An important work is J. Gregor's *Wiener szenische Kunst, Band II, Das Bühnenkostüm* (1925).

(b) *The Ballet and the Dance.* As intimately connected both with the origins of drama and with later theatrical spectacle, the dance deserves some attention from students of the playhouse. G. Desrat's *Dictionnaire de la danse, historique, théorique, pratique et bibliographique, depuis l'origine de la danse jusqu'à nos jours* (1895) is an ambitious and useful compilation. There are various works on the history of dancing; L. de Cahusac's *La Danse ancienne et moderne ou traité historique de la danse* (1754) among older books, and the anonymous *The Dance* (1911) and E. L. Urlin's *Dancing, Ancient and Modern* (1912) among more modern books are probably the most valuable. The late Cecil Sharp's works should be considered in connexion with the rise of medieval drama. M. L. Becker's *Der Tanz* (1901), C. Blasis' *The Theory of Theatrical Dancing* (1888), C. F. Menestrier's *Des Ballets anciens et modernes selon les règles du théâtre* (1682) have all historical value. For the Russian ballet *The Decorative Art of Léon Bakst* (1913) and the various souvenir programmes give illustrations of settings, costumes, and groupings.

(c) *Pantomime.* Intimately connected with the ballet is the pantomime. R. J. Broadbent's *A History of Pantomime* (1901) gives a general account of the *genre*, and M. Willson Disher's *Clowns and Pantomimes* (1925) contains lively notes on the later developments of the type. J. Weaver has an early essay of no great value on *The History of the Mimes and Pantomimes* (1728), and P. Hugounet has left a volume entitled *Mimes et pierrots: notes et documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire de la pantomime* (1889). Obviously this subject must be connected with the mimic art of earlier periods as outlined in Sections I and II.

I have made no mention here of books on acting, as the subject is not directly touched upon in the text of this book. A fairly full collection of such works will be found in the catalogue of the Allen A. Brown collection. Most of these do not concern the student of the theatre, since their notes and advice are largely practical; but some, such as W. Archer's *Masks or Faces?* (1888), contain important discussions regarding the psychology of the art, and others, such as L. B. Campbell's *The Rise of a Theory of Stage Presentation in England during the Eighteenth Century* ("Publications of the Modern Language Association of America," xxxii, ii), discuss the actor in connexion with the theatre and the setting.

INDEX

Abbaye joyeuse de Lesache-Profit, L', 77
Acco, character in Phlyakes, 49
Acharnians, 49
Acropolis, at Athens, 20
Actes des Apôtres, 76, 79
Actors, in Greece, 26; limited number of, 36; low status of, in Rome, 57; in medieval dramas, 76–78; in *commedia dell' arte*, 105; in Elizabethan times, 134–5; in Restoration times, 168–169
Actresses, in medieval plays, 79–80; in Restoration times, 168–169
Acts, origin of division of dramas into, 37–38
Adam, arrangement of *mansions* in, 65–66, 69, 70, 74, 76
Addison, Joseph, 138, 178
Adelphoe, 83–84
Aeschylus, 18, 19, 20, 21, 32, 36, 37, 38; uses the *mechane*, 33
Agathon, 36
Aggas, Robert, scenic artist, 167
Aglaura, 131
Agon, in Greek comedy, 38
Aiorai, suspension machines in Greek theatres, 34
Ajax, 37
Alabaster, William, 121
Alberti, designs theatre for Pope Nicholas V, 81
Albion's Triumph, 127
Alcuin, 60, 61
Alexander the Great, 17
All Souls College, Oxford, 159
Alleyn, Edward, 121, 134
Amiens, 77
Ammianus Marcellinus, 60
Amphitruo, revival of, 82
Anapiesmata, a part of the Greek theatre, 34
Andria, 57, 82–83
Angelo, 194
Animal costumes, in Elizabethan theatres, 207
Ankuris, part of *mechane*, 33
Anne, Queen, 170
Antigone, 42
Antipodes, The, 131
Antwerp, theatre at, 124, 126
Apollonia, St, play of, 67–68
Appia, Adolphe, 194
Apron, absence of, in Continental theatres, 145; in Restoration theatres, 162, 163, 167; in eighteenth-century theatres, 173; disappearance of, 190
Aquinas, Thomas, 61
Ariadne auf Naxos, 204
Ariane, design of theatre in, 163, 165, 215
Arion of Methymna, 19
Ariosto, Lodovico, 86, 103, 104
Aristophanes, 20, 23, 35, 37, 49, 58, 108, 200; uses the *mechane*, 33; position of chorus in, 36
Aristotle, 23, 36, 37
Arlecchino—*see* Harlequin
Arlequin—*see* Harlequin
Arlequin Empereur dans le Monde de la Lune, 59
Arlequin Homme à Bonne Fortune, 59
Arlequin Misanthrope, 59
Arles, Roman theatre at, 71
As You Like It, 81
Ascensius, Jodocus Badius, 82
Aspendos, theatre at, 51
Astley's Amphitheatre, 185
Atellan farce, 49, 58–59, 61; connexion with *commedia dell' arte*, 106, 109
Athenian theatre of fifth century B.C., 17
Athens, theatre of Dionysos at, 17, 18; collapse of wooden benches, 20; original orchestra, 20; stage in, 23; Hellenistic reconstruction of, 24, 25, 26, 30, 31, 51, 52
Aubrey, John, 131
Audience, in Elizabethan times, 134–135; in Restoration times, 169; in the eighteenth century, 170–171
Auditorium, in Greek theatres, 20; of Hellenistic type, 24, 29; of Graeco-Roman type, 30; in Roman theatres, 51; in Italian theatres, 88, 90, 140–143; in Restoration theatres, 162–165; in eighteenth-century theatres, 185–187
Aulae regiae, 32, 85, 88
Auleum, curtain used in Roman theatres, 55–56, 103, 128. *See also* Curtain
Aulularia, 111
Aurelio and Miranda, 175
Auxerre, 77
Aversa, 58
Awnings, in Renascence theatres, 81

Babylonians, The, 35
Bacchus, 19
Baldinucci, Filippo, 92
Ballerina, in *commedia dell' arte*, 107
Bannister, John, actor, 179
Barbaro, Daniello, 89
Barry, Mrs Elizabeth, 169
Barry, Spranger, actor, 180
Bartholomew Fair, 171
Basochiens, 77
Becket, St Thomas à, 62
Beggar's Opera, The, 187
Behn, Mrs Aphra, 182
Bell, Hamilton, 163
Bellamy, Miss, actress, 177
Bellero Fonte, Il, 215
Benson, actor, 18
Bergamo, native place of Harlequin, 108
Berlin, Jessner's work at, 96, 198; theatres at, 198–203
Bethlehem, 60
Betterton, Thomas, 171
Beverini, 145
Beverley, records of performances at, 75
Bibiena, Alessandro, 146
Bibiena, Carlo, 146
Bibiena, Ferdinando, 142, 143, 146, 147, 149, 151, 156

Bibiena, Francescoda, 143, 146
Bibiena, Giovanni Maria, 146
Bibiena, Giuseppe, 143, 144, 145, 146, 150
Birds, 33
Blackfriars Theatre, 118, 120, 126, 131, 135
Boaden, James, 175
Bodens, Captain Charles, 170
Bologna, performances at, 82, 165
Bols, Jerome, design by, 89
Bonarelli, Prospero, designs in *Il Solimano*, 102–103
Bosse, Abraham, print by, 112
Bottega del Caffè, La, 88
Bottles, used for coloured lighting, 98–99
Bourges Cathedral 64
Box-set, 166, 174
Bridges Street, Theatre Royal at, 157
Brieux, Eugène, 195
Brighella, 109, 111; his origin, 106; his characteristics, 108–109, 110
Britannia Triumphans, 206
Brome, Richard, 131
Bronteion, thunder-machine used in Greek theatres, 34. *See also* Thunder-machine
Brunelleschi, Filippo, 73–74, 85
Brunsden, actor, 182
Bucco, character in *fabula Atellana*, 59, 109
Bucco Adoptatus, 59
Built-up effects, in Italy, 155–156, 176
Bungay, records of performances at, 75
Buontalenti, Bernardo, scenic artist, 92–95, 97, 102, 128
Burbage, James, 123, 124, 125, 126
Busino, Orazio, letter of, quoted, 135
Byzantium, 60; performances at, 106

Cahier and Martin, 64
Cain and Abel (Coventry play), 74
Callot, Jacques, designs by, 102, 103, 107, 109, 110, 111, 112
Cambrai, 77
Camilla Veronese, 107
Campania, home of *fabula Atellana*, 58
Campaspe, 120
Campo, used in Italian for *platea*, 69
Canaletto, 156
Cantarina, in *commedia dell' arte*, 107
Cantelino, Sigismondo, 86
Canterbury, records of pageants at, 69, 75
Capitano, 106, 110, 112; his origin and characteristics, 110
Capon, William, scenic artist, 174–175, 187
Carlell, Lodowick, 131, 207
Cartwright, William, 130
Case—see Mansions
Casina, 58
Cassaria, 86
Castle of Perseverance, The, 72, 74, 76
Cato, 178
Caton, Der sterbende, 183
Cavea, in Roman theatre, 51, 85. *See also* Auditorium
Cervantes, Miguel de, 117
Cesare, Il, 183
Chabham, Thomas de, on *histriones*, 61
Châlon-sur-Saône, 77
Chambers, Sir Edmund, 126, 205
Charles II, 169
'Charon's steps,' in Greek theatres, 34
Chatsworth collection of theatrical drawings, 96, 180 *et passim*
Chaumont, 77
Chauny, 77
Chechov, Anton, 196
Chelmsford, record of mystery plays at, 74, 75
Chester cycle of mystery plays, 64, 69, 79
Chesterton, G. K., 200
Chinese theatre, 39, 40, 106
Chiton, in Greek tragedy, 38; in Greek comedy, 43, 57
Chiusetti, in *Commedia dell' arte*, 105
Chlamus, in Greek tragedy, 38–39; in Greek comedy, 43; in Roman comedy, 58
Chloridia, 136, 137
Chorika, in Greek comedy, 38
Chorus, in comedy, 19; central element in Greek drama, 20; intercourse between chorus and actors, 24; disappearance of, 29, 36; presence of, in drama, 36; idealized time of, 37
Christ Church, Oxford, performances at, 130
Christian influence on early stage, 60–62
Christmas plays in Middle Ages, 63
Christmas Tale, A, 176
Church, influence of, on early medieval drama, 62–64; used as theatre in Middle Ages, 64–65; influence of, on arrangement of *mansions*, 65–68
Cibber, Colley, 172
Cicirrus, character in mime drama of Rome, 59, 109
City Dionysia, 35
Cleon, 35, 48
Cloud effects, in Renascence theatres, 102, 215–216; in English masques, 128–129
Clouds, 33, 49
Clyomon and Clamydes, 119
Cockpit-in-Court, 133–134
Cockpit Theatre, in Drury Lane, 126
Cock's feather, or coxcomb, used by Roman comedians, 109
Cogo, Niccolò del, scenic artist, 82
Cohen, Gustave, *Histoire de la Mise-en-Scène*, 66
Colman, George, the Younger, 175
Colman, Mrs, 168
Colombina, 107–108
Comedy, origins of Greek, 19; etymology of, 19; Old Greek, 20, 37, 48; Middle, 20; New, 20, 36, 43, 58; parts of Greek, 37–38; characters of Greek, 43–48; Roman, 49, 58–59, 106
Comedy of Errors, The, 181
Comic elements, in Greek tragedy, 37; in medieval drama, 62
Comic scene, 84, 87
Comica accesa, in *commedia dell' arte*, 107
Comico acceso, in *commedia dell' arte*, 107
Commedia all' improvviso—see Commedia dell' arte
Commedia dell' arte, 105–115, 170–171
Commedie sostenute, 105
Commenius, 127
Common Conditions, 119
Comos, 19, 36
Concertatore, 105
Concetti, in *Commedia dell' arte*, 105
Conflagration effects, in medieval theatres, 74; in Renascence theatres, 91; in Elizabethan theatres, 120
Confrérie de la Passion, 63–64, 77, 116
Confréries pieuses, 77
Congreve, William, 170
Connards, 77
Constantinople, 60
Conti, Antonio, 183

INDEX

Conventions, in Greek plays, 27; in Restoration plays, 167
Copeau, Jacques, 197, 203, 204
Cornards, 77
Cornaro, Caterina, 106
Cornford, F. M., on Greek drama, 49
Cornwall, mystery plays in, 71–72, 74, 75
Corps municipaux, 77
Corpus Christi, festival of, 63
Costume, in Greek tragedy, 38–39; in Greek comedy, 43; in Roman drama, 57; in medieval drama, 74–76; of Fools, 77–78; in Elizabethan drama, 135–137, 177, 180, 181, 205–209; in the eighteenth century, 177–184; de' Sommi's views on, 212–213
Court, staging at English, 119–120
Court Beggar, The, 131
Covent Garden Theatre, 171, 175, 185, 189
Coventry, cycle of mystery plays, 64, 74, 75, 76; pageants at, 70
Coviello, 113
Craig, Edward Gordon, 150, 197–198, 201, 204
Crane, in Greek theatres, 34; in Elizabethan theatres, 125
Creizenach, W., 124, 205
Cry, used in medieval performances, 79
Cucurucu, 109
Curculio, 43
Curtain, in Roman theatres, 55–56; back curtains in Renascence theatres, 82–84; front curtain rarely used in Renascence, 103–104; in Revels accounts, 119–120; in Elizabethan public theatres, 125; in English masques, 128; in Restoration theatres, 166; use of, in nineteenth century, 190
Cuthbert, scene-painter, 193
Cyclops, The, 19
Cyclorama, suggestion of, in Greek theatre, 34
Czeschka, Karl, scenic artist, 198

DANCING in Greek theatres, 20
D'Ancona, A., *Origini del Teatro Italiano*, 75, 86
Daniel, Samuel, 127, 128
Dario, 145
D'Avenant, Sir William, 131, 157–158, 180
Davies, J. A., 193
Davis, Mrs, 169
Dayes, scene-painter, 193
De Witt, drawing of Swan, 121–122
Debat, 119
Décor simultané—*see* Multiple setting
Delos, theatre at, 24, 25; money payments for, 28
Delpini, 171
Demophilus, 58
Denmark House, performances at, 131
Départ des Comédiens, Le, 115
Descent of the Holy Spirit, The, 96
Desire under the Elms, 194
Deus ex machina, origin of phrase, 33; examples of, 125
Deutsches Opernhaus, 202
Deutsches Theater, 198
Devils, in medieval plays, 66, 67, 68, 74, 75, 76, 77
Diables, 77
Dido, costume of, 207
Dionysos, 17, 19, 20, 21
Diphilus, 58
Distegia, part of the Greek theatre, 34, 124
Disturbances, in the eighteenth-century theatres, 170–171
Dithyramb, 19
Djemila, theatre at, 51
Doctor, learned, type in classic comedy, 49. *See also Dottore*
Domus, in medieval plays—*see Mansions*
Donaueschingen, [illegible], 65–67, 72
Doors, on the Greek stage, 31–32, [illegible]; in Restoration theatres, 168; in eighteenth-century theatres, 172–173
Dörpfeld, Professor, and the Dionysian theatre, 20; his view concerning the stage, 25, 26
Dorset Garden, theatre in—*see* Duke's Theatre, in Dorset Garden
Dossennus, character in *fabula Atellana*, 59, 111
Dottore, 106; his origin and characteristics, 111, 113
Dresden, Schauspielhaus, 202
Driessen, *Der Ursprung des Harlekin*, 108
Drolls, acted during the Commonwealth, 157
Drury Lane, Cockpit in, 126; later theatres in, 157, 159, 162, 163–165, 171, 172, 174–175, 185, 186, 187, 188
Dryden, John, 135, 165, 169
Dublin, record of performances at, 74
Ducale Nuovo, Teatro, at Mantua, 143
Duchartre, Pierre Louis, *La Comédie italienne*, [illegible]
Dugdale, Sir William, 70
Duke's Theatre, in Dorset Garden, 157, 164–167, 171, 173
Dulfo, Floriano, 82
D'Urfey, Thomas, 165
Dutch theatres, 124

EAST LONDON COLLEGE THEATRE, 203
Easter plays, in Middle Ages, 62
Eastern characters, costumes of, 136–137, 172, 177, 205–206
Eastern Empire, dramatic shows in, 60, 106
Eidophuskion, 176, 194
Ekkuklema, used in Greek theatres, 33, 35; used in Elizabethan theatres, 126
Electricity, in theatres, 185
Elektra, 197
Elizabethan age, theatres of, classical influences on, 17, 34; medieval influence on, 69
Embates, variant of *kothornos*, 39
Embolima, 36
Empress of Morocco, The, 164–167
Enchanted Isle, The, 189
Enfants Sans-Souci, 77
Ennius, 58
[illegible], 33
Epeisodia, in Greek comedy and tragedy, 38
Ephesus, theatre at, 25, 30, 31
Epidauros, theatre at, 24; stage at, 28; *parodoi* at, 52
Epilogue, 38
Episkenion, meaning of, 23, 25, 29, 30, 51
Eretria, theatre at, 24, 25; 'Charon's steps' preserved at, 34
Estals, in medieval plays—*see Mansions*
Este, Ercole d', Duke of Ferrara, 82
[illegible]
Euripides, 18, 19, 21, 36
Evreinov, Nicolai, 196
[illegible], 77
Exodos, in Greek tragedy and comedy, 38
[illegible], in Greek theatres, 33; in Renascence theatres, [illegible]
Expressionism, 200–201

[illegible]
Fabula palliata, 58
Fabula riciniata, 59

Fabula tabernaria, 58
Fabula togata, 58
Faery Pastorall, The, 120
Faithful Shepherdess, The, 131
Falcone, Teatro, at Genoa, 143
Fall of Man, The (Coventry play), 74
Fano, Teatro di, 139, 143, 144
Farnese, Teatro, at Parma, 89–90, 91, 118, 125, 134, 140, 144
Feast of Fools, 77
Ferrara, performances at, 82, 86, 128, 169
Feste pel Conferimento del Patriziato a Giuliano e Lorenzo de' Medici, Le, 81–82
Festival arrangements in Greek theatre, 35–36
Feuillerat, A., and Revels accounts, 119, 206–207
Feyntes, medieval machinery, 73
Ficoroni, *De larvis scaenicis*, 111
Filharmonico, Teatro, at Verona, 143
Fille Sçavante, La, 115
Fitzgiggo Riots, 172
Fitzstephen, William, on medieval plays, 62
Fletcher, John, 131, 208
Florian, 109
Florimène, setting of, 129–130, 131, 158
Fools, in medieval times, 77–79
Footlights, origin of, 98; in Elizabethan theatres, 126; removed by Loutherbourg, 176
Formal settings, 203–204
Fortune Theatre, 121, 122
Fouquet, Jehan, miniature of, 67, 68
Fourth Wall, problem of, 195–196
Foux, Les, of Auxerre, 77
France, early medieval drama in, 62, 65–67, 74, 77, 79–80; Renascence theatres in, 87, 116–117; *Commedia dell' arte* in, 112–113; later theatres in, 140–144
Frogs, 49
Frons scaenae—*see* Stage front
Frontispiece—*see* Proscenium arch
Furtenbach, J., *Architectura Civilis*, 88

Gaillardons, 77
Galearia, Roman wigs, 57
Galeri, Roman wigs, 57
Galleries, in theatres, 140
Galliari, Bernardino, scenic artist, 156
Galliari, Fabrizio, scenic artist, 156
Galliari, Giovanni, scenic artist, 156
Galliari, Giuseppe, scenic artist, 156
Garçon et l'Aveugle, Le, 62
Garrick, David, 157, 171, 176, 177, 178, 179, 182, 183, 190
Gas, 200
Gas lighting in theatres, 185
Gaultier Garguille, 112
Genoa, Teatro Falcone at, 143
George Barnwell, 170
Geranos, crane used in classic theatres, 34
Germany, theatres in, 150, 198–204
Ghent, theatre at, 124, 126
Gherardi, 113, 115
Ghosts, costume of, 207
Gilds, town, take over medieval plays, 63, 76–77
Globe Theatre, 17, 118, 121, 123
Gogol, Nicolai, 201
Golden Age, The, 126
Golden Branch, The, 189
Goldoni, Carlo, 83, 105, 114
Goliardi, 61, 77
Gonzaga, Pietro, scenic artist, 155
Goodman's Fields Theatre, 171
Goodwin, George, 193
Gordon, W., scene-painter, 193
Gosson, Stephen, 135
Gottsched, J. C., 183
Gourmont, Jean de, 73
Graeco-Roman theatres, 17, 30–31, 51
Greek theatre, 17–49; influence on later stage, 17, 23, 35, 77, 197, 203, 204; comparison of, with medieval, 80
Grieve, Thomas, scenic artist, 190
Gros-Guillaume, 112
Grosses Schauspielhaus, 202, 203
Gwyn, Nell, 169

Habington, William, 131
Haigh, A. E., *The Attic Theatre*, 33
Hall-stages, 118–119
Hamlet, 178, 198, 205
Hampton Court, performances at, 131
Handel, G. F., 172
Hannibal and Scipio, 133
Harlay, Hachille du, 108
Harlequin, 107, 109, 111, 170, 171; his origin, 106, 108
Harlequin Dr Faustus, 114, 171
Harlequin Mungo, 114
Harlequin Necromancer, 114
Harpax, part of *mechane*, 33
Hartley, Mrs, actress, 182–183
Haymarket Theatre, 157, 171, 173, 187
Heautontimoroumenos, 43, 46, 83
Heaven, position of, in medieval plays, 66, 67, 71, 72; machinery used for, 73–74
Heavens, in Renascence theatres, 99–101; in Elizabethan theatres, 123
Hecuba, 42
Hecyra, 83–84
Heiress, The, 174
Hell, position of, in medieval plays, 66, 67, 71, 72; effects in connexion with, 74
Hell-mouth, in medieval plays, 69, 70, 75; in later times, 217
Hellenistic theatres, 17, 22–30
Henderson, actor, 178, 181
Henry IV, 137, 181
Henry VI, 208
Henry VIII, 208
Henslowe, Philip, 121, 136, 137, 205–207
Heywood, John, interludes of, 72
Heywood, Thomas, 126
Hill, Aaron, 183
Himation, in Greek tragedy, 38
His Majesty's Theatre, 185
Histriones, 60–62
Holland, theatres in, 146
Homer, 36
Hope Theatre, 121
Hôpital de la Trinité, used by Confrérie de la Passion, 77
Horace, 109; his dramatic rules, 35
Hospitalia, 32, 84
Hôtel de Bourgogne, 112, 113, 116–117, 118, 119, 126, 127, 130
Houses, in medieval plays—*see Mansions*
Hue and Cry after Cupid, The, 128

INDEX

Hull, pageants at, 70, 75; payment to actors at, 76
Huret, print by, 112
Hyposkenion, in Greek theatres, 30; in Roman theatres, 51

IBSEN, HENRIK, 195
Ikria, in Greek theatres, 20
Illumination—*see* Lighting
Illusion, in the theatre, 197
Imola, Teatro d', 139, 143, 144
Indian drama, 106
Ingegni, medieval machines, 73
Inner stage in Elizabethan theatres, 122–124
Inns of Court, performances at, 120
Inspector-General, The, 201
Interludes, 64, 72–73, 105, 119
Interludium de Clerico et Puella, 62, 106
Intermedii, in Italian theatres, 91, 93–95, 128
Iphigenia at Aulis, 21
Iris, costume of, 207
Iron Chest, The, 175
Irving, Sir Henry, 190, 194
Isidore of Seville, 60
Italy, 17, 59, 60; classical influence on theatres of, 17, 81–102; medieval drama in, 77; Renascence theatres of, 81–104; *commedia dell' arte* in, 105–117; later theatres of, 138–156

JAPANESE drama, 106
Jessner, 96, 197, 198, 204
Jocasta, 119
Johan Johan, 72
Jones, Inigo, 87, 89, 99, 127–134, 136, 137, 138, 157, 159, 168, 173, 174, 185, 206, 207, 216
Jongleurs, meaning and origin of word, 61–62
Jordan, Thomas, 169
Juno, costume of, 206–207
Juvarra, Filippo, scenic artist, 150, 152–155, 174

KAISER, GEORG, 200
Karagoz, Turkish puppet play, 106
Kean, Charles, 190, 191, 192, 193
Kean, Edmund, 176
Keith, W. G., 134
Kelly, George, 194
Kemble, J. P., 175, 184, 190, 191, 193
Keraunoskopeion, lightning machine used in Greek theatres, 34. *See also* Thunder machine
Killigrew, Thomas, 157, 162
Kingston-on-Thames, record of mystery plays at, 74, 75
Kirkham, Francis, 121
Knights, 49
Kolpoma, padding for tragic actors, 39
Kothurnos, in Greek tragedy, 26, 39; in Roman tragedy, 57
Krade, machine used in Greek theatres, 34. *See also* Crane
Kyd, Thomas, 205, 206

LAETUS, JULIUS POMPONIUS, 81
Laon, 77
Lautenschlager, 202
Lawrence, W. J., *The Elizabethan Playhouse, and other Studies*, 104
Lear, King, 77, 176, 191, 198
Leicester, record of performances at, 75
Lenaea, 35
Lewis, M. G., 175
Lewis, W. T., actor, 178–179
Licensing Act, 171
Liefrinck, H., 73
Lieux, in medieval plays—*see Mansions*
Light, effects of, in medieval drama, 73; in Renascence theatres, 96–102, in the eighteenth-century theatres, 176
Lighting, in eighteenth-century theatres, 97, 176; in Elizabethan theatres, 126; in modern theatres, 202; de' Sommi's views on, 213–4
Lillo, George, 170
Lincoln's Inn Fields, theatre at, 157, 171
Lindisfarne, Bishop of, 61
Liturgical drama, 63
Lloyds, F., scene-painter, 193
Loca, in medieval plays—*see Mansions*
Logeion, in Greek theatres, 23
Lombards, 60
Lords Masque, The, 128
Loutherbourg, 175–177, 185, 187, 202
Lucerne, arrangement of *mansions* in Passion play at, 65–68; costumes used at, 76
Luoghi deputati—*see Mansions*
Lyceum Theatre, 185
Lyly, John, 118, 120
Lyons, actors at, 77; edition of Terence printed at, 82–84
Lysistrata, 200

Macbeth, 191
Macco, character in Phlyakes, 49, 59
Maccus, character in *fabula Atellana*, 49, 59, 109
Maccus Miles, 59
Maccus Virgo, 59
Machina versilis—*see Periaktoi*
Machines, in Greek theatres, 23, 31–35; in Roman theatres, 55–56; in medieval theatres, 73–74; in Renascence theatres, 96–102; in Elizabethan theatres, 125–126
Macklin, Charles, actor, 181, 182, 183, 184
Macready, William Charles, 190
Magalotti, Count Lorenzo, 162
Magna Graecia, drama in, 28, 49. *See also Phlyakes*
Magnesia, theatre at, 30
Mahelot, Laurent, scenic artist, 116–117, 174
Mahomet, 178
Maisons—*see Mansions*
Male, Émile, 64–65
Malone Society, 137, 206, 207
[illegible]
Mansions, in medieval plays, 65–73; in Renascence theatres, 82–85, 116–117; in English theatres, 119
Mantua, performances at, 86, 143
Marcellus theatre, Rome, 50
Maria Theresa, 203
Marionettes, in Middle Ages, 62, 70
Marlowe, Christopher, 171
Marsigli, Fino and Bernardino, scenic artists, 82
Marston, S. B., reconstruction of Elizabethan theatre by, 125
Martelli, P. J., 183
Mary Magdalen, St, 70, 72–73, 74
Mask, The, 85
Masks, in Greek tragedy, [illegible]; in Roman comedy, [illegible]; in the Middle Ages, [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

Masques, 118, 127–130
Mass service, foundation of medieval drama, 62–63
Masse Mensch, 201
Mauvaises Braies, 77
May Fair, 171
Mechane, in Greek theatres, 33; in Renascence theatres, 96. *See also* Machines *and* Crane
Mediceo, Teatro, 92
Megara, home of Phlyakes, 49
Meierhold, V., 197, 200, 201
Melmoth, Mrs, actress, 182–183
Mémoire pour la Décoration, 116–117
Menaechmi, revival of, 82
Menander, 20, 58
Merchant of Venice, The, 191, 206
Mercury, costume of, 207
Meriasek, St, 72
Messalina, 121, 122
Metz, medieval drama at, 79, 80
Mezzetino, 109, 110
Michau, 112
Middle Ages, mimes during, 60–62; theatres in, 64–80; influence of, on later times, 81, 87
Middle classes, and the theatre, 170
Midsummer Night's Dream, A, 191, 192, 207
Milan, Teatro alla Scala in, 140
Miles Gloriosus, 46, 47, 48, 58
Miles gloriosus, type in drama, 49, 110
Miller, James, 178
Mimi, in Roman days, 57; in the Middle Ages, 60–62, 64, 77–78; influence of, on *commedia dell' arte*, 105–106, 108–112, 113
Mimus, 59. *See also Mimi*
Ministralli, 61, 62
Ministri, origin and meaning of word, 61, 62
Minstrel, 61
Miracle, The, 198, 199, 204
Miracles de Notre Dame, 76
Modish Couple, The, 170
Molière, 105
Monconys, M. de, 162
Monk, The, 175
Monopoly, theatrical, in London, 157
Morality plays, 64
Morris, scene-painter, 193
Moscow Art Theatre, 196, 199, 200
Moscow Kamerny Theatre, 200
Mossop, Henry, actor, 180
Mostellaria, 58
Multiple setting, in medieval times—*see Mansions*; in Renascence times, 87; in France, 116–117, 118; in England, 119–120, 126–127, 130
Munich, theatre at, 202
Murray, C., actor, 178–179
Music room, in Restoration theatres, 164–167
Mustapha, 158–161
Myllus, character in Phlyakes, 49
Myra, theatre at, 30
Mystère du Viel Testament, 64, 66
Mystery plays, 64–80, 81

NABBES, THOMAS, 133
Naples, Old Theatre at, 141; Teatro S. Carlo in, 141
Nature, 72
Nature of the Four Elements, The, 72
Neptune, costume of, 206
Nero, 51
Neuber, Carolina, actress, 183
Nicholas V, Pope, 81
Nicoll, Allardyce, *British Drama*, 121, 127, 131, 159, 200
Nie-Boska Komedja, 198
Nîmes, Roman theatre at, 71
Nobody and Somebody, 136, 137
Norris, Herbert, 168, 176, 203
Northbrooke, John, 135
Norwich, pageants at, 70, 75
Nudity, on the medieval stage, 76

Oberon, the Fairy Prince, 128, 137
O'Keeffe, John, 176, 190
Okribas, variant of *kothornos*, 39
Oldfield, Mrs Anne, actress, 182–183
Olimpico, Teatro, 85–90, 91, 118; model followed in Elizabethan and later theatres, 123, 124, 144, 203, 204, 216
Olympia, 203
Olympic Academy of Vicenza, 88
Omai, 176
O'Neill, Eugene, 194
Onkos, in Greek tragedy, 26, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43
Onomastikon, 18, 40. *See also* Pollux
Open-air theatres in Greece, effects in, 31
Opera, influence of, on scenic art, 145; in England, 171
Opéra de Campagne, L', 113–114
Orange, theatre at, 31, 52, 54–55, 88, 123; used in Middle Ages, 71
Orchestra, in Greek theatres, 20, 22, 23; type of, in Hellenistic theatres, 24, 29; in Graeco-Roman theatres, 30; in Roman theatres, 51; in Elizabethan theatre, 122, 123
Originaux, Les, 114
Origo Mundi, 71
Orlando Furioso, 103–104
Oropos, theatre at, 24, 25
Ostrogoths, 60
Othello, 196
Ottoboni, Cardinal, theatre of, 150
Oxford, performances at, 120, 127

PAGEANTS, in English mystery plays, 69
Palladio, Andrea, designs *Teatro Olimpico*, 88, 138, 187; influence of, 116, 118, 123, 124, 125, 133, 134, 168, 203, 204
Palliolo, P., 81–82
Pandoste, 117
Pantalone, 106; his origin and characteristics, 110, 111–112
Pantomime, in England, 114
Pantomimus, 59
Pappus, character in *fabula Atellana*, 59
Parabasis, in Greek comedy, 38
Parabosco, Girolamo, 90
Paradise, part of French theatre, 66
Paraskenia, 22, 25, 32
Paris, performances at, 165, 169
Paris Exposition, 200
Parma, Teatro Farnese at, 89–90
Parodos, in Greek theatres, 22, 25; in Roman theatres, 52–53; technical term for portion of Greek comedy, 37
Passionate Lovers, The, 131, 207
Patara, theatre at, 30
Patient Grissell, 119, 123
Pausanias, 24
Peace, 35

INDEX

Pedrolino, 109
Pellegrino, Il, 90
Percy, William, 120
Periaktoi, use of, in Greek theatres, 32–33, 34, 84, 85; use of, in Renascence theatres, 91, 168; in English masques, 128, 130
Permanent set, suggested in *commedia dell' arte*, 115; in eighteenth-century Italy, 150
Persians, The, 20
Perspective, in scenery, 85–153 *et passim*; in Elizabethan theatres, 120
Phaedrus, 52
Phaeton, costume of, 207
Phallus, worn by Greek comic actors, 43
Phelps, Samuel, 190
Philander, 91
Philemon, 58
Phlyakes, illustrations of, 28–29; characters in, 49; costumes in, 57; connexion with *commedia dell' arte*, 106
Phoenix, in Drury Lane, 133, 135, 157
Phruktorion, beacon-tower used in Greek theatres, 34
Pierrot, 109
Pinakes, in Greek theatres, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33
Pirandello, Luigi, 196
Piranesi, Gian Battista, scenic artist, 155–156
Planché, J. R., 190–191
Platea, in medieval theatres, 69, 72; in Renascence theatres, 87
Platform stage, used for interludes, 73; used for *commedia dell' arte*, 114–115
Plautus, T. Maccius, 46, 48, 58, 105, 106; revivals of plays by, 81–83
Play of Love, A, 74
Play of the Weather, The, 72
Pollux, 18, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 96, 124
Polyclitus, builds theatre at Epidauros, 24
Pompey, theatre of, 50
Pope, Alexander, actor, 181
Pozzo, Andrea, 138–139, 149–150
Prampolini, Enrico, 200
Priene, theatre at, 24, 25
Prince of Wales' Theatre, 185
Princess Turandot, 200
Pritchard, Mrs, actress, 177
Private theatres, in Elizabethan times, 126–127
Prologos, in Greek comedy, 37; in Greek tragedy, 38
Prologue, 38
Prometheus Bound, 20
Prometheus Unbound, 21
Proscenium, in early Renascence theatres, 82–84; in *Teatro Olimpico*, 88–90; in Elizabethan theatres, 121, 125
Proscenium arch, origin of, 90, 125; in English masques, 127–128; in Italian theatres, 144; in Restoration theatres, 162–168
Proskenion, meanings of, 22, 29, 30, 125. *See also* Proscenium
Pseudolus, 43
Pulcinella—*see* Punch
Pulpitum, stage in Roman theatres, 54
Punch, his origin, 109; his characteristics, 110; his mask, 110, 111
Purgos, part of the Greek theatre, 34
Puritan opposition to theatres, 120–121, 168, 170

Queen of Arragon, The, 131, 133, 134
Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket, 171
Quin, James, 179

Racine, 87, 138
Raleigh, Sir Walter, 120
Realism, absent in Old Comedy of Greece, [illegible] drama, 80; in later scenic art, 174–176, 194, 195–197
Red Bull Theatre, 135, 157
Reddish, Samuel, actor, 182
Redoutensaal, 203, 204
Reinhardt, Max, 197, 198, 202, 203
Relieves, in English theatres, 129
Religion, and Greek theatre, 20, 49
Renascence, classical influence in, 17, 18, 23, 35, 37, 49, 81; theatres of, 81–104
Restoration period, feathered headdress in, 39; theatres in, 157–165
Resurrection, Cornish mystery play, 72
Resurrection, French mystery play, arrangement of *mansions* in, 65–66
Revels' Office, accounts of, 119–120, 126, 206–208
Revolving stage, 201, 202
Reyher, Paul, *Les Masques anglais*, 129–130
Riario, Cardinal Raffaelle, 81
Rich, John, 114, 171
Richard II, 208
Richard III, 198
Richards, Nathaniel, 121
Riciulina, 110
Robert, K., *Die Masken*, 57–58
Robertson, J. G., 183
Robertson, T. W., 195
Robinson, Robert, scenic artist, 166
Rogers, Archdeacon, on performance of mystery plays, 69
Roman characters in drama, costumes of, 136–137, 177–178
Roman drama—*see* Comedy, Tragedy
Roman theatre, costumes of, influenced by Greek, 38; characters of, influenced by Greek, 43–44; structure, 50–57; used in Middle Ages, 71; influence of, on later times, 77–78, 86, 88, 122
Romanticism, in scenic art, 173–178
Rome, performances at, in Renascence times, 81–82; Teatro Tor di Nona at, 143
Romeo and Juliet, 124, 176
Roof, in Roman theatres, 51. *See also* Heavens
Roscius, 57
Rouen, Hell-mouth at, 69; actors at, 77
Rounds, used for Cornish mystery plays, 71–72
Rowe, Nicholas, 178, 181
Roxana, design of theatre in, 121, 122
Royal Circus, 171
Royal Grove, 171
Royal Slave, The, 130–131
Royalty Theatre, 173, 185
Russia, theatres in, 140, 146, 155, 157, 196, 199, 200, 206–207
Rutland House, performances at, 157–158

Sabbatini, Nicola, *Pratica di* [illegible], 91, 97–98, 99–103, 128, 138, 202
[illegible]
Sadler's Wells Theatre, 171, 172, 185
Sagalassos, theatre at, 30
Salisbury Court Theatre, [illegible]
Salle des Machines, in Paris, 138, 165
[illegible]
[illegible]
S. Carlo, Teatro, 141, 143
SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Teatro di, 92
San Cassiano, Teatro di, at Venice, [illegible]
San Gallo, Antonio, il Giovane, sketch by, 85

San Lorenzo, 74
Sandford, Samuel, 169
Sanniones, 106
Saracen invasions, 60
Sarcophagus, in Easter mysteries, 64–65
Satyric drama, 19
Satyric scene, 84, 87
Scaena ductilis, 91
Scala, Teatro alla, 140, 143, 144
Scaliger, J. C., 116
Scamozzi, Vincenzo, 88, 90, 94
Scapino, 109, 110
Scaramucia, 113
Scenarii, of *commedia dell' arte*, 106, 109, 113–114
Scene-building, in Greek theatres, originally a dressing-hut, 21–23
Scenery, in Greek theatres, 32; in medieval theatres, 67–73; in early Renascence theatres, 81–92; in Elizabethan theatres, 119–134; in Restoration theatres, 165–167; in eighteenth-century theatres, 173–178; in nineteenth-century theatres, 190–194; in modern period, 195–204
Scenes, changing of, 90, 91–96
Scenic façade, in Graeco-Roman theatres, 30–31
Scharf, George, 193
Schwabe-Hasait lighting system, 202
Sea effects, in Renascence theatres, 92
Secrets, medieval machinery, 73
Sedes, in medieval plays—*see Mansions*
Semicircle, part of a Greek theatre, 34
Seneca, 58; revivals of plays by, 81
Sepulchre, in medieval drama, 64–65
Serlio, his *Architettura*, 81, 89, 90, 92, 138, 174, 185, 187; instructions regarding scenery, 86–88, 91; influence of, 116, 117, 119, 123, 126, 131, 133
Servandoni, Giovanni, 146
Settle, Elkanah, 164–167
Shadwell, Thomas, 165
Shakespeare, William, 126, 134, 168, 175, 180, 187, 191, 193, 206–209
Shelving, Paul, scenic artist, 200
Shoreditch, theatres in, 121
Shutters, 163, 166
Siddons, Mrs Sarah, 182
Side-wings, 129–131, 140, 150–155, 158–166, 174
Siege of Rhodes, The, 157–159, 169
Sièges, in medieval plays—*see Mansions*
Silver Age, The, 126
Skene, 21, 24, 25, 29, 30, 33. *See also* Scene-building, Stage
Skope, part of the Greek theatre, 34
Sleeping Beauty in the Wood, The, 190
Socrates, 33, 48
Soliman and Perseda, 205, 206
Solimano, Il, 102, 103
Somation, padding for comic actors, 43
Sommi, Leone Hebreo de', 214; views on lighting, 96, 183, 210, 213–214; on costumes and plays, 211, 213
Sophocles, 18, 19, 32, 37, 197
Sots, 77
Southwark, theatres in, 121
Southwark Fair, 171
Spectacle, in Restoration theatres, 165; in nineteenth-century theatres, 187
Sphinx, The, 189
Stage, in Greek theatres, 21, 22, 23–30; in Roman theatres, 51; in early Renascence period, 81; in *Teatro Olimpico*, 88; in Elizabethan theatres, 121–125, 126; in Rutland House, 158; in Whitehall, 158; in Restoration theatres, 162–165
Stage-front, in Hellenistic and Graeco-Roman theatres, 25–31; in Roman theatres, 51–52
Stalls, in theatres, 187–188
Stanislavski, C., 197
Stasima, in Greek comedy, 38
Stationary settings, rare in English mystery plays, 69
Stecher, *Histoire de la littérature néerlandaise*, 69
Steps, from stage to orchestra, in Greek theatres, 29; in Roman theatres, 51; used in eighteenth-century designs, 150; in modern theatre, 198, 204
Stern, Ernst, scenic artist, 198, 199, 204
Stevenson, scenic artist, 166
Stichus, 48
Streeter, Robert, scenic artist, 166
Strindberg, August, 195
Stropheion, part of the Greek theatre, 34
Suckling, Sir John, 131
Suidas, 34
Summa Theologiae, 61
Sumurun, 204
Suppliants, The, 20, 36
Suppositi, I, 103
Suppôts du Seigneur de la Coquille, 77
Swan Theatre, 121
Symbolism, in Greek theatres, 39, 48; in Roman theatres, 57; in modern theatres, 197, 200–202, 203
Syrmata, the Roman *chiton*, 57

Tairov, A. Ia., 200
Tancred and Gismund, 120
Teatr Polski, 198
Teatro Magnetique, 200
Teichos, part of the Greek theatre, 34
Telbin, scene-painter, 193
Tempe Restor'd, 207
Tempest, The, 130, 137, 191, 207
Temple of Love, The, 180–181
Terence (P. Terentius Afer), 57, 58, 62, 105, 106; revivals of plays by, 81–82; illustrations in early editions of, 82–84, 116, 119
Termessos, theatre at, 30, 31, 32
Tethys Festival, 128
Teutsche Schaubühne, 165
Theatre, origin of word, 20
Theatre Arts Monthly, The, 200
Theatre of the Soul, The, 197
Théâtre Italien, Le, 113–115
Théâtre du Vieux Colombier, 203, 204
Théâtres de foire, 115
Theatron, original meaning of, 20, 85
Theodosius, 106
Theologeion, in Greek theatres, 23, 34
Thersytes, 72, 119
Thespis, contribution of, to theatre, 19
Thiboust, Jacques, 76
Thorndike, Ashley H., 205
Three Sisters, The, 196
Thunder-machine, 96, 120, 126, 176
Thymele, in Greek theatre, 20
Title-boards, in Elizabethan theatres, 119, 120
Titus Andronicus, 135, 206
Toller, Ernst, 201
Tor di Nona, Teatro, at Rome, 143

INDEX

Torch-bearers, The, 194
Torelli, Giacomo, da Fano, 102; invents a theatrical machine, 92; his scenic work, 138, 146, 215–228
Torino, Teatro di, 141, 143, 144
Towneley cycle of myſtery plays, 64, 74
Trackers, The, 19
Tragedy, origins of Greek, 19; parts of Greek, 38; characters in Greek, 40–42; Roman, 58
Tragic Scene, 84, 87, 88, 89
Tralles, theatre at, 30
Transformation scenes, in Renascence theatres, 92
Trap-doors, in Elizabethan theatres, 126
Tree, Sir Herbert Beerbohm, 190, 193
Tretise of miraclis pleyinge, 61
Trinity College, Cambridge, 125
Trinummus, 58
Trompettes-Jongleurs, 77
Truculentus, 46
Turkish puppet play, 106
Turlupin, 112
Twickesbury, records of performances at, 75

UDINE, PELLEGRINO DA, scenic artiſt, 86
Unity of action, in Greek drama, 37
Unity of place, in Greek drama, 37; in Renascence drama, 117, 124
Unity of time, in Greek drama, 37
Upper ſtage, in Elizabethan theatre, suggeſted in Greek *diſtegia*, 34
Urbino, performances at, 86
Uscite, in *Commedia dell' arte*, 105

VACHTANGOV, E. B., 199
Valenciennes, myſtery play at, 67, 69, 70
Vanbrugh, Sir John, 171
Vere Street, Clare Market, 157
Verona, theatre at, 143
Versurae, 168
Verulanus, Sulpicius, 81
Vesnin, Alexander, 200
Veſtris, Lucia Elizabeth, 190
Vice, in morality plays, 74, 75
Vicenza, Teatro Olimpico at, 88–90, 123, 124
Vienna, performances at, 157
Vienna, Redoutensaal, 203
Vigarani, Carlo, 138
Vigarani, Gaspare, 138, 146
Vinci, Leonardo da, 85–86
Vision of the Twelve Goddesses, The, 127
Vitruvius, 18, 19, 32; rediscoverers of, 81, [illegible] ſtage, 84–85, 87, 88, 89, 91, 96
[illegible], 77
Vomitoria, entrance ways to Roman theatres, 52–53

Wagenspel, 'pageant' of Netherlandish myſtery plays, 69
Wallis, Miss, actress, 182, 184
Warsaw, theatre at, 198
Webb, John, assiſtant of Inigo Jones, 129; designs of, 157–160
Whitefriars Theatre, 126
Whitehall, performances at, 158
Wigs, on Roman ſtage, 57; in medieval plays, 75
Wilde, Oscar, *The Truth of Masks*, 136, 205
Wilmot, J., 120
Winter's Tale, The, 191–193
Wits, The, design of ſtage in, 121, 122, 124, 126
Woffington, Mrs, actress, 182, 184
Wonders of Derbyshire, The, 176
Wood, Anthony à, *Hiſtory of the University of Oxford*, 130–131
Woodward, H., actor, 176
Worceſter, records of plays at, 76
Wren, Sir Chriſtopher, theatre designs by, 159, 162–166
Wupper, Die, 200
Wycherley, William, 170

YORK, cycle of myſtery plays, 64, 74, 79, 96
Younge, Miss, actress, 182–183

Zafaldo, used in Italian for *platea*, 69
Zanni, in *Commedia dell' arte*, 106
Zurich, devils in myſtery play at, 69, 73

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